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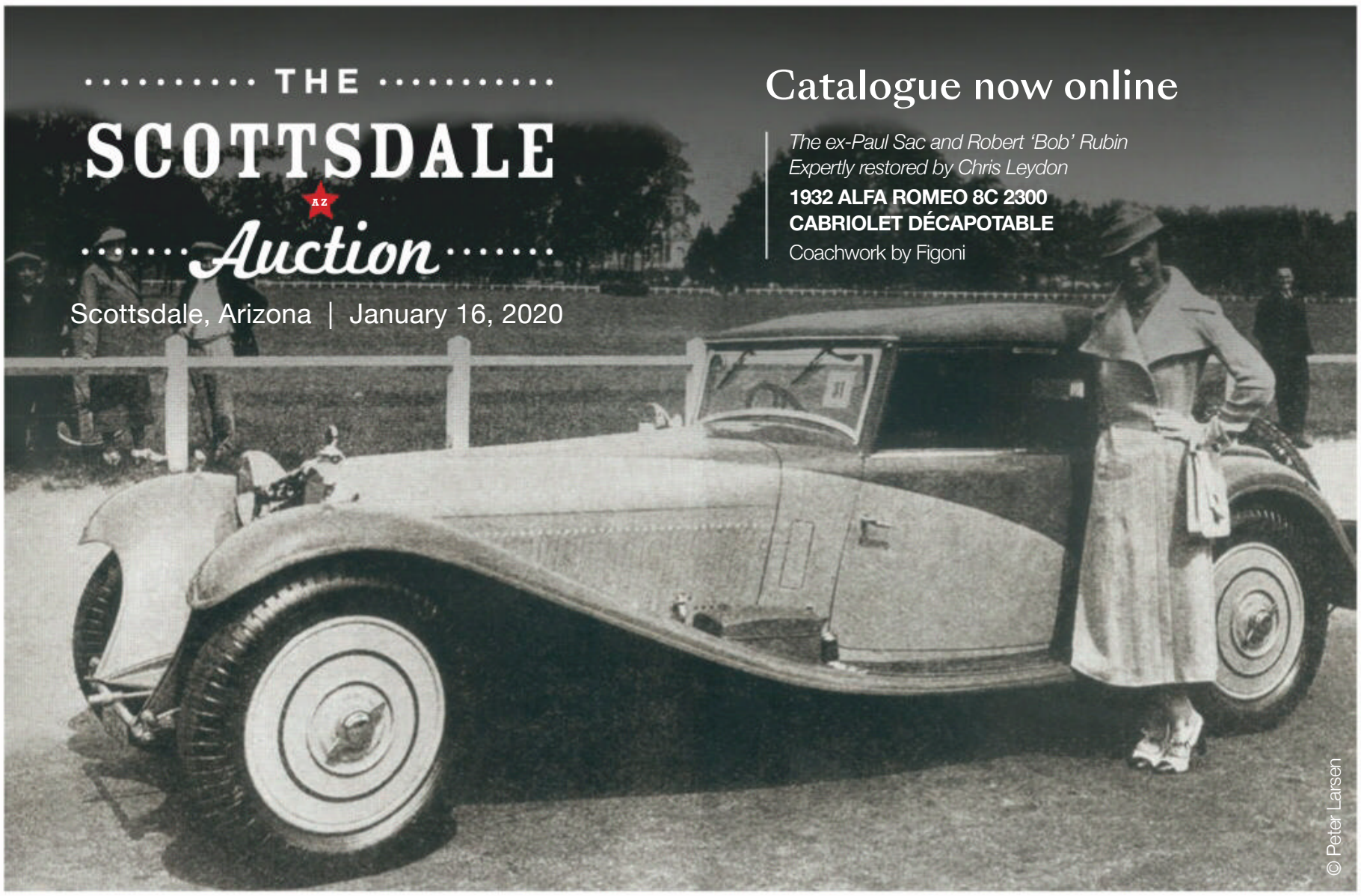
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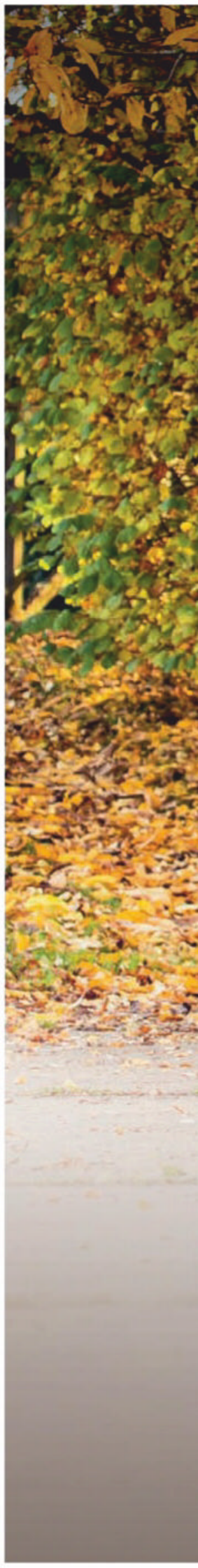
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THE BIG PICTURE

Has the B743 in Muirkirk, East Ayrshire, ever looked more picture-perfect? But it's a deceptively tranquil scene, as the 1965 Porsche 911 of Stephen Owens and navigator Nick Bloxham tackles the 25th-anniversary Le Jog, HERO's epic annual rally across Britain (see p27). Sadly, they just missed out on a gold medal, but battled through the fatigue to secure a silver. "At one point I thought I saw elephants at the side of the road," said a sleep-addled Bloxham afterwards, "but fortunately they turned out to be rocks!" **LP**

WILL BROADHEAD

Welcome

The review of our favourite things from the past 12 months (p12) always puts me in reflective mood, and this year is no exception. There's little doubt that we are in a time of change for the movement, and both we as enthusiasts and those who make their living from the industry face challenges from all sides.

After a lengthy boom period, the market has been slowing down, as results from the usually buoyant auction houses confirm. Dealers are also reporting tough trading conditions out there, but with a silver lining for those of us who simply buy cars to enjoy rather than to make money: there are fewer pure investors and more genuine enthusiasts coming through their doors.

The future for driving them can often seem bleak, with ever-increasing legislation to restrict the use of cars perceived as dirty in comparison with the appliances we're now encouraged to hum around in. Yet the anonymity of modern motoring presents an opportunity: as our daily drives become less interesting, so the pleasure of driving a classic is magnified. More than ever, old cars are important – as is preserving the right to use them, and here organisations such as the FBHVC need our support.

There's new blood on the way, too. Car clubs' efforts to attract younger members are paying off, and the glut of apprentices keen to acquire traditional skills is very encouraging. So welcome, 2020, the future looks rosy.



ALASTAIR CLEMENTS
Editor in chief



'If it was Audi that got the four-wheel-drive rally car ball rolling, it was Lancia and the Delta that picked it up and ran with it'

92



116



102



Contents

NEWS

The big picture 6
Best of 2019 12
News & events 18
Classic diary 25
Sport 27
Lost & found 30

REVIEWS

Motoring art 36
Books 39
Models 43
Garage gear 44

COMMENT

Mick Walsh *From the cockpit* 49
Simon Taylor *Full throttle* 51
Martin Buckley *Backfire* 53
Letters 55
Next month 57

FEATURES

FOUR BY PHWOAR 92
They were a generation apart on the rally stage, but the Audi quattro and Lancia Integrale became arch rivals on the road

QUEEN OF THE DESERT 102
The Golden Sahara II, darling of the '60s custom circuit, returns to the spotlight

SMALL BUT MIGHTY 110
Mick Walsh samples a jewel of French engineering, the rasping Amilcar C6

TWO-SEATER TRIO 116
Simon Charlesworth tries to separate MG Midget, Honda S800 and Fiat 850

DOUBLE CHEVRON CREATION 124
Citroën never built a factory DS coupé, so stylist Gérard Godfroy made his own

A MILLER'S TALE 130
Greg MacLeman meets Hugh Miller and delves into a fascinating photo archive

BLACK PANTHER 136
Driving the luxurious Rio, a Dolomite in drag designed to appeal to the super-rich

A PICTURE OF EFFICIENCY 142
On track in 'Le Monstre', the special DB created to win the Index at Le Mans

CUMBRIAN CLASSICS 148
Taking a tour of the Lakeland Motor Museum and its Campbell family tribute

END OF THE ROAD 152
The hearse enthusiasts with a passion for classics with a very singular purpose







Continued over the page…



Contents

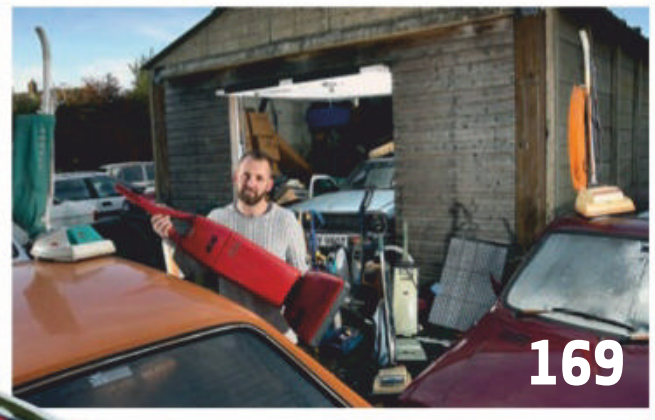
LIVING WITH CLASSICS

Our classics 160
Your classic *Ford Escort Mexico* 167
Also in my garage 169
The specialist 170

BUYING AND SELLING

The marketplace 173
Buyer's guide *Alfa 156 GTA* 178
Case histories from 189
Future classic *Toyota GR Supra* 234







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2019 highlights

It's been a fantastic year to be a classic enthusiast. Here's the *C&SC* team's most memorable moments

GREG MACLEMAN

CAR OF THE YEAR One I previously didn't know existed: the Denzel 1300 (above). I spent a hot summer's day thrashing the little racer around the hills south of Lisbon and fell in love with it. Sadly, I didn't win the Euromillions, or it would have come home with me after RM Sotheby's Sáragga sale.

BEST DRIVE Returning the first privateer Healey to race at Goodwood to the circuit, for the first time since its restoration, was a privilege. It was also the first time I'd driven the track, making the drive even more special.

BEST EVENT Far and away the most memorable event of 2019 was the De Dion-Bouton Club's Grand Prix, during which I took the controls of a three-wheeler for a series of endurance races on the hallowed Brooklands concrete. The enthusiasm of members and passion for keeping such historic machines on the road was really inspiring.

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION After selling my MG and my Triumph being in pieces all year, I'm determined to make the most of my classic in 2020. Say "yes" to everything and drive there in the 2500 is my mantra. Who knows, I may even convince my wife to take it somewhere hot for our holidays…





ALASTAIR CLEMENTS

CAR OF THE YEAR Rétromobile is unmissable for me because there's always something to stop you in your tracks. For 2019 it was the towering 'Giant of the Desert', the Berliet T100 (above left).

BEST DRIVE Once in a blue moon the planets align to bring you the perfect car on the perfect road – such as *The Italian Job* Miura on the Great St-Bernard Pass. A massive tick off the bucket list.

BEST EVENT Returning to Monterey after a decade was a joy. I enjoyed the more down-to-earth gatherings, but Pebble Beach (above right) remains the pinnacle and is always memorable.

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION There are several must-see events I've never managed to get to; this year I plan to rectify that. Top of the list are the Festival of the Unexceptional and Zoute Grand Prix.



JULIAN BALME

CAR OF THE YEAR Two cars have been on my radar for years: the first-generation Ford Bronco and the MG TC. At Hershey I saw examples of both, which did nothing to dilute my interest. Bronco prices have gone through the roof, but the car that led the US post-war fascination with sport cars remains affordable.

BEST DRIVE An early morning run to Bicester in my Lincoln Continental (above) after two years in hibernation. The weather and lack of traffic combined to make the journey a delight.

BEST EVENT Seeing my toys all lined up in a row, no doubt for the first and last time, at the London Concours was special.

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION To finally drive an MG TC and (hopefully) get it out of my system.

MICK WALSH

CAR OF THE YEAR The fashion for 'continuation' cars has no appeal, but recreating a lost design has to be applauded. The rebirth of the 1939 Bentley Corniche has been a drawn-out affair, but thanks to the passion of historian Ken Lea, the craftsmanship of Ashley & James and Bentley funding, this Derby MkV streamliner was completed for the centenary year.

BEST DRIVE The Alfa Romeo 8C Long Chassis (below) lived up to all my expectations. Roaring around Cambridgeshire in this beauty confirmed its place on my dream list.

BEST EVENT Being held every two years makes Vintage Montlhéry extra special. From two Jappic cyclecar replicas to the Alfa theme, the weekend was heaven for pre-war machinery.

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION To finally finish the definitive Bugatti Type 59 book, now aided by an expanded team with top marque experts Mark Morris and Julius Kruta.



DAMON COGMAN

CAR OF THE YEAR Restomod pioneer Ringbrothers' 890bhp 'Valkyrja' (below) takes a '69 Chevy Camaro and makes it better in every way. It blew away the judges at the SEMA show.

BEST DRIVE Heading to Le Mans in my BMW 525e, flanked by friends in a Mustang and a Mitsubishi Evo, was an odd mix, but that sense of inclusivity and adventure is what makes our hobby. We took the long route, got lost, ate lunch on the bonnet… and nothing fell off!

BEST EVENT The FIA Euro Finals at Santa Pod: it's the most visceral experience, with four wheels and an engine expressing themselves in the most antisocial way possible.

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION It's another 'I'll definitely finish my car' story. I have two VWs in component form, so completing at least one of them shouldn't be *too* hard, should it?





MARTIN BUCKLEY

CAR OF THE YEAR I surprised myself by being as impressed by the Jowett Javelin (above) as I was by the Lancia Aprilia in May's *C&SC*. Only 50 years after the motor car had been invented, in the intelligently packaged flat-four Javelin we already had something comfortable, refined and recognisably 'modern' to drive.

BEST DRIVE Taking my Oldsmobile Toronado, five-up, to the Rally of the Giants. It's less than 40 miles from where we live, but every journey in this car is an event. Coming back at dusk, with the headlamps raised, we wafted home for an appointment with a Chinese takeaway and *The Iron Maiden* on YouTube.

BEST EVENT A trip to Monterey has to be the highlight. I enjoyed the relaxed street events the most, and where else would you see the Aga Khan Maserati 5000GT coming the other way in traffic?

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION Use my old cars as much as possible, and try to buy a couple more (cheap) things from 'The List.'



LIZZIE POPE

CAR OF THE YEAR They were in London for just four days in November, but getting to see a trio of outlandish '50s BAT Alfa concepts was amazing.

BEST DRIVE Driving a trio of classic Aston Martins to the Goodwood Revival was special, and the DB6 Volante (left) was the icing on the cake. It's the perfect car in which to sweep into the Duke's estate.

BEST EVENT The V&A's 'Cars: Accelerating the Modern World' exhibition was thought-provoking and interesting – and it runs until 19 April.

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION I said this last year and I meant it (I had an entry and everything), but my health got in the way. So 2020 will mark my return to historic rallying. Promise.

SIMON TAYLOR

CAR OF THE YEAR The HWM-Jaguar Coupé (right). This forgotten rarity looked even hornier than in period photos, and drove better than it should for a one-off based on a redundant racing chassis.

BEST DRIVE Almost any time I was in my Stovebolt Special, but particularly on the B4077 in the Gloucestershire moonlight.

BEST EVENT Drive for June was the first event I'd organised: half a dozen nice cars on nice roads in aid of Alzheimer's Research UK.

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION Get down to the best Shelsley time I did in the Stovebolt 10 years ago, when I was younger and braver.





JACK PHILLIPS

CAR OF THE YEAR To see Bentley's Blower standing silent and alone in the middle of Longcross test track was surreal. It had stopped on its way to tackling the Mille Miglia, kindly permitted by Bentley, and has lost none of its stature. The history it's seen, the people it's carried, remain with it in an unmistakable aura.

BEST DRIVE Having dreamed of them since I was a child, it has to be the Renault 5 Turbo 2 (left) around a sun-baked Aérodrome de la Ferté Gaucher. It could have been terrible and I'd still have climbed out happy, but instead it was brilliant – albeit too short.

BEST EVENT I'll whisper it, but I like the Silverstone Classic more than the Goodwood Revival… The racing has no frills, it seemingly never stops and is always entertaining. Yes, Silverstone is big, concrete and characterless, but with thousands of cars on display and almost as many on track, it's a staple of my year.

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION To finally take my Volvo on a long-distance run with the family. It's the whole reason we bought it – to head off to the Lakes, Wales, anywhere distant from London – but something has always conspired against it.

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LUC LACEY Mick Walsh's period attire always adds to the imagery, transporting you back in time, and for me this picture captures Mick in his element. Shooting it tight allows for a closer look at all the wonderful details of the Scarab Mk1 sports-racer, while using a slower shutter speed helps to add some movement to the scene.



JAMES MANN The Aston DB3S and Jaguar D-type back-to-back was a great shoot. We found a stretch of the old A40 that was broad and smooth, with not another car in sight, and riding in the DB3S for the cockpit shot with the D-type tearing by was an evocative moment that I hope I captured in my photograph… If only it had a soundtrack!



JOHN BRADSHAW The Riviera was probably the biggest car we've had in the studio, but was interesting to shoot – which makes life easier. Greg MacLeman and I went to pick up the Buick and (inevitably) the fuel gauge didn't work, so we thought we'd better top it up. We pulled into the garage and after 15 minutes still couldn't find the fuel filler – in the end we had to call the office, to be told that it was behind the numberplate…



OLGUN KORDAL To be asked to photograph a Lamborghini Miura is one dream, but to be asked to shoot one in the Alps is quite another, and then when I found out that it was the actual car from *The Italian Job* it was all starting to seem unreal. I chose this shot because I love seeing the car on the move – the joy of a thoroughbred of this calibre is seeing them doing what they were designed for, even if only fleetingly.



WILL WILLIAMS The Figoni Bugatti Type 55 going up the hill at Goodwood might not be my favourite car, but I'm a sucker for shooting on a crisp autumn morning. It wasn't all glorious, though, because the weather was miserable when we arrived. We got a break in the weather to get the shot, only for the skies to turn black and brooding again. As I left, the rain was literally bouncing off the Tarmac; it must have been our lucky day.

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Robert Kudela's 1948 Talbot-Lago T26 GS was the winner at Salon Privé

PARIS AWAITS BEST OF THE BEST

The eight spectacular finalists for The Peninsula Classics 2019 Best of the Best Award have been revealed, and it is going to be a tough year for the judges. All of the contenders have already won best of show gongs at some of 2019's most prestigious concours, three of them based in the UK, with the top prize to be revealed on 6 February at The Peninsula Hotel, Paris. At the same venue last year, Ginny and David Sydorick's stunning 1937 Alfa Romeo 8C-2900B Touring Berlinetta landed the trophy.

Having beaten all-comers at the 24th Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance, the 1938 Mercedes-Benz 540K Autobahn-Kurier from The Keller Collection looks like being one of the favourites (*C&SC*, May '08). Another former *C&SC* feature car in the running is Robert Kudela's Figoni et Falaschi-bodied 1948 Talbot-Lago Grand Sport Coupé, star of our December 2019 issue and Best of Show at Salon Privé in September.

The same weekend, at Hampton Court's Concours of Elegance, Jon Fasal's 1919 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost Torpedo Skiff by Barker took home the top prize, and as a result it is also shortlisted.

A pair of Italian cars make the final cut and offer the most youthful choices for the judges: the 1958 Ferrari 335S Scaglietti Spider that emerged victorious at the Cavallino Classic; and Goodwood's Cartier Style et Luxe Concours d'Elegance winner, Nicolas Edel's 1950 Abarth 205 Monza Berlinetta.

It seems only right that two Bentleys should join the fray in the marque's centenary year, and one of them is owned by the award's co-founder, Sir Michael Kadoorie. His fabulous Gurney Nutting-bodied 1931 8 Litre Dual Cowl Tourer qualifies having landed top honours at Pebble Beach last summer, and it goes head-to-head with another 8 Litre, the Foursome Coupé by Freestone & Webb that won at premier French event Chantilly Arts & Elégance.

Last but not least is the only American-born offering, the 1931 Stutz DV32 Convertible Victoria with LeBaron coachwork that scooped Best of Show at The Quail, A Motorsports Gathering.

"This award is truly a celebration of automotive excellence," says The Hon Kadoorie. "These motor cars are works of art, and this year there is an incredible field."



Quail's pick was Stutz DV32 Convertible Victoria



Amelia victor: Mercedes Autobahn-Kurier



Kadoorie's Bentley 8 Litre Sports Tourer



Royce Silver Ghost won at Hampton Court



335S was top Ferrari at Cavallino Classic



Goodwood's Cartier king: 1950 Abarth 205



'31 Bentley 8 Litre Foursome at Chantilly





1925 Silver Ghost Piccadilly Roadster was voted Best of Show; Mercedes Gullwing was Best European at the first Palm Beach Concours

Cars meet fashion in Palm Beach

Yet more expensive names were added to Worth Avenue in Palm Beach, Florida, on 8 December, as Bugatti, Mercedes, Ferrari and Rolls-Royce mingled with Chanel, Jimmy Choo and Louis Vuitton for the inaugural running of the Palm Beach Concours.

A catwalk of cars lined the street of fashion royalty, with some beautiful examples of the Mercedes 300SL – one of which was named Best European – sitting alongside Pagodas, while modern Ferraris met their earlier cousins, including numerous Dinos, Daytonas and F40s, plus a 275GTB. A 1992 F40 was deemed best of all the Prancing Horses, taking home the Ferrari Award, while a 1970 Dino was top in Ferrari Pre-1990.

Rolls-Royces and Bugattis glistened alongside their American counterparts, with a 1925 Silver Ghost Piccadilly Roadster claiming the Best of Show. Best of Italy went the way of a 1975 Lamborghini Urraco P250, and an Aston Martin DB5 won the 'England' prize.

Locally based Le Mans legend Derek Bell was on hand to sign autographs, and was reunited with the Löwenbräu-liveried Porsche 962 he shared with Al Holbert at Daytona. Personality and *Chasing Classic Cars* host Wayne Carini was the event's guest of honour. Bell's pick of the show was the '75 Ferrari 275GTB, while Carini opted for an Aston Martin DB4GT.

The assembled guests picked a vibrant 1962 Chevrolet Corvette for the People's Choice Award, and a 1959 Cadillac DeVille claimed the Palm Beach Concours Award.



Well-detailed Willys Jeep lines up beside 'Blower' pedal car and Studebaker Avanti



Fine 'Splittie' looked at home on the coast



Lambo Gallardo Spyder among the exotics

Waterside wonders on the south coast

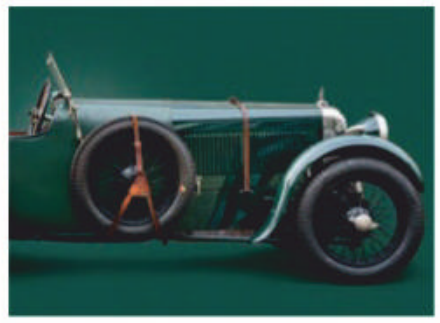
A century of motoring came together to brighten Hythe Marina Village in Southampton on 24 November, with modern supercars joined by early rarities at Classics and Supercars on the Quay.

More than 280 vehicles were on display, many originally from across the Atlantic. Mustangs of all ages, from the early fastbacks to modern incarnations and much in between, proved as popular as ever. Corvettes and Stingrays, plus Dodge Challengers and Pontiac Firebirds, were among those representing the rest of America's muscle. But perhaps the highlight was a rare Studebaker Avanti.

The well-attended event celebrated all aspects of the classic vehicle world, including modified models and stock survivors such as a 1953 Citroën Traction Avant and late MG Y-type. And there was huge variety among the European fare, from Vauxhall Chevettes, Vivas and a Cavalier Coupé to BMW 8-Series, via a Lamborghini Gallardo and Ferrari Mondial.

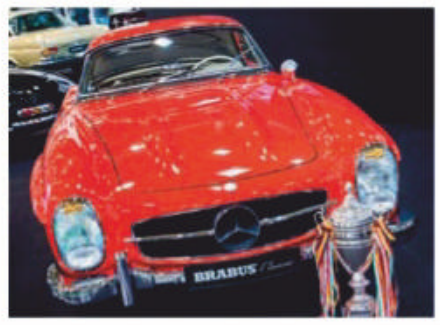
Five fire engines even made their presence felt among the two- and four-wheeled machinery, one of which had appeared on the 1990s television show *London's Burning*.

"This free event has really caught the eye of keen motoring enthusiasts across the south of England," said a delighted founder and organiser Mark Elliott.



MIDLANDER GOES DUTCH

Alvis' centenary is the subject of a new exhibition at the Louwman Museum in The Hague. Running until 2 February, and curated with assistance from the Alvis Owner Club Nederland, the display features a line-up of 17 cars.



BENZ LANDS TOP HONOURS

A 1961 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Roadster claimed the trophy for most beautiful classic car at the Essen Motor Show, which took place from 30 November to 8 December. On sale with Brabus Classic for €1.89m, the SL was fresh from a 4000hr restoration.



IRISH RALLY RAISES €25K

Organisers of the Déjà Vu Donegal event presented the Donegal Hospice with a cheque for €25,000 in November, following the picturesque rally's fundraising efforts earlier in the year. The rally takes in 120 miles, including part of the Wild Atlantic Way.



BOND SHOW UPDATED

Star cars from the new James Bond movie, *No time to die*, have joined the Bond in Motion display in Covent Garden, London. A replica of the battle-scarred Aston Martin DB5 and a V8, plus a Land-Rover Series III, will now be part of the collection.





Scott Yates' Ladies' Choice winner Mini. Right: Personality Pick winning MG TF

Commonwealth classics converge

Australia's annual celebration of all things British returned for its 44th showing on 1 December, as more than 300 classics turned out in force for Terribly British Car Day in Queanbeyan Park, near Canberra, New South Wales. This year's event was hosted by the Triumph Car Club and drew exhibitors from as far afield as Melbourne, Sydney, Wagga Wagga, Newcastle and Pambula, with British classics even travelling from the spiritual home of Aussie V8 Supercars, Bathurst.

As in previous years there were prizes for the best-presented club displays and individual cars. The Club Shield went to the local ACT Mini Club, which laid on an impressive display to mark the model's 60th anniversary assisted by the local BMW Mini dealership. One of the stars of the stand, Scott Yates' brightly coloured Clubman towing a mock Moke, also won the Ladies' Choice award.

Mayor Tim Overall and Mayoress Nicole Overall turned back the clock for their favourites, selecting Ian Pagett's Sunbeam Rapier and Howard Taylor's 1931 Austin Seven, respectively.

'Competition for the Riders' Choice was fierce, with plenty of attention given to an Ariel that had thumbed a lift in a Series One Landie.'

Meanwhile, competition for the Riders' Choice was fierce, with plenty of attention given to an Ariel that had thumbed a lift in a Series One Land-Rover. But the award went to a 1952 Douglas Vespa, while the Personality Pick was MG TF owner Michelle Van Wyck.

Away from the award winners, Jaguar claimed the largest turnout for a single marque, but the spectrum of British classics was well represented by manufacturers ranging from Aston Martin, Bristol and Rolls-Royce, through to Armstrong Siddeley, Lanchester and even a Ford GT40. The Le Mans racer attracted huge attention coinciding with the cinema release of *Le Mans '66*.



BL material gets new lease of life

The British Motor Museum is launching 'The Art of Selling', a new research project concentrating on the sales and press material from the archives of the former British Leyland. Funded by awards from The National Archives, The Pilgrim Trust, The Wolfson Foundation and The Foyle Foundation, the research by the BMM's Katie Finn and a team of volunteers is available to the public in an online catalogue, which went live before Christmas.

Nearly 16,500 items have been catalogued in 3000 hours' work, from original drafts of press releases to marketing materials, with 5000 more to be added during 2020. It is available at The National Archives' 'Discovery' database website (discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk) and is searchable by make or model. The material can also be viewed in person by appointment in the museum's Reading Room.

Meanwhile, the BMM has also released its 2020 calendar, featuring 18 events including the National Metro & Mini Show – which will mark 40 years of the Metro on 21 June – and new gatherings such as the MGF Register's 25th Anniversary on 25-26 July.

See britishmotormuseum.co.uk for more details on all of the above.



FOODBANK PARCEL RUN

The spirit of giving washed over Porsche Club GB and Bicester Heritage's residents in December, which combined to donate more than 200 food parcels to the Bicester Foodbank. PCGB's VW Doka was enlisted for the job.

"We know our members are generous," says club manager Mandy Sear, "but even we were amazed at the amount of food that was donated.

"One had an accident on the way but managed to get his food parcel to us, commenting that ensuring families can eat at Christmas puts a crashed car into perspective."



POLO STORICO IN LONDON

Lamborghini London opened its doors to the marque's heritage division, Polo Storico, for a 17-car display of significant models in December. The line-up included a Miura S, 400GT, Islero S, LM002, Diablo and Countach.



DUBS' XMAS DONATIONS

More than 100 classic and custom Volkswagens took part in the New Forest VW Santa Run from Beaulieu to Southampton General Hospital on 1 December, delivering presents to children and teens suffering with cancer and haematological disorders.



CONCOURS LOOKS BACK

Pebble Beach will welcome previous Best of Show winners to its 70th-anniversary concours d'elegance on 16 August to celebrate its illustrious history. Other features include Iso Rivolta, Pininfarina, Porsche 917 racers and the Carrera Panamericana.



LANDIES LOAD STONELEIGH

More than 5000 visitors flocked to the most popular The Great British Land Rover Show to date on 24 November. Club turnout was strong, with a move to the Stoneleigh Park venue allowing organisers to scrap fees. Visit www.greatbritishlrshow.com



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Displays often covered both aspects of the revised event

Cars and boats come together in Germany

Motorworld Classics combined with the Boat and Fun show to welcome a record attendance of more than 50,000 visitors to Messe Berlin from 18-22 November.

The clock was turned back to the 1920s, with a 'Roaring Twenties' gala opening the event that carried over into the displays. A 1922 Ego 4/14 PS and the equally rare 1920 BOB Sport headed the Golden Twenties collection, which was compiled in partnership with the German Museum of Technology and the PS Speicher museum, and focused on cars built in the capital.


E-type gatecrahes the German marques

Both models are believed to the final survivors of their type to be found anywhere in the world.

Like many shows, Motorworld relies heavily on dealers to build the wide-ranging display, but American classics and culture were afforded their own hall with cars, pool tables, diner food and more. A replica of the Pontiac Firebird known as KITT from *Knight Rider* proved a draw, and celebrity customiser John D'Agostino picked a 1929 Ford Model A as the winner of the 'Crystal Award of Excellence'.

German motorsport success was celebrated with a guest appearance from Clemens Schickentanz, pilot of the cult-hero 'Red Pig' Mercedes-Benz 300SEL AMG that won the 1971 24 Hours of Spa. Rally champion Armin Schwarz was a special guest, too.



Alfas gather at beach spot

Members of the NSW division of the Alfa Romeo Owners' Club of Australia drove south from Sydney in late November to enjoy lunch at the Headlands Hotel in Austinmer, perched on a rocky outcrop overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

Postponed following the region's devastating bushfires, the run featured 15 owners in Alfas new and old, including a lone black 105-series Spider, a quartet of the classic Bertone-styled 105 coupés (and only one was red!), plus a rare 1980s Giulietta saloon.

The oldest were a Giulietta Sprint coupé and Spider (above), both red and left-hand drive.


CHRIS MARTIN

Varied collection of Alfa Romeos made for quite a sight on the Pacific Ocean coastline



TATRAS, TRACTORS AND TANKS

Pioneering marque Tatra will take centre stage at this year's Rétromobile, held at the Parc des expositions de la Porte de Versailles in Paris from 5-9 February. Significant examples will span from the firm's early years through to its success in the Paris-Dakar.

In keeping with the show's tradition of interesting machinery, 30 vintage tractors from 11 marques will shine the spotlight on France's industrial past, while a V8-powered Somua tank – one of just three survivors, and the only one in working condition – will be on loan from the Musée des Blindes. It will be one of many military vehicles in the demos outside. Visit retromobile.com

Federation update

The FBHVC moved to a new stand at the NEC Classic Motor Show in November, with the promise of a unique display of vehicles.

Our 1953 Midland Red double-decker bus was unmissable, and with the increasing focus on contemporary electric vehicles we featured three classic examples: a 1912 Baker Electric, a 1974 Zagato Zele city car – the only vehicle actually manufactured by the styling house – and a 1940 electric motor and bespoke gearbox manufactured by Rosengart to replace the ubiquitous Austin Seven's engine.


American-made Baker Electric car was one of the stars of the FBHVC display

Motorcycles were represented by an Abingdon King Dick from 1930 and a Matchless motorcycle and machine gun sidecar combination that was produced in 1914 and declined by both the British and Russian armies!

Other rare cars included the only surviving Rosengart Sutosix SuperSept Coupé, a Trojan Utility Car and an elegant Alvis Graber coupé. Finally, a 1955 Triumph TR2 works development car was accompanied by period photographs in the Standard-Triumph training school.

We've accepted the show organiser's challenge of another unique collection next year!



DAVID WHALE
FBHVC CHAIRMAN

The FBHVC lobbies in Westminster and Brussels. Call Emma Balaam on 01708 223111, email secretary@fbhvc.co.uk or see www.fbhvc.co.uk

ARTCURIAL
//Motorcars



1929 Mercedes-Benz 710 SS Sport Tourer by Fernandez & Darrin



1965 AC Cobra 289 # 6027
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1979 BMW M1 Procar – Ex Niki Lauda 79' Procar Championship Winner



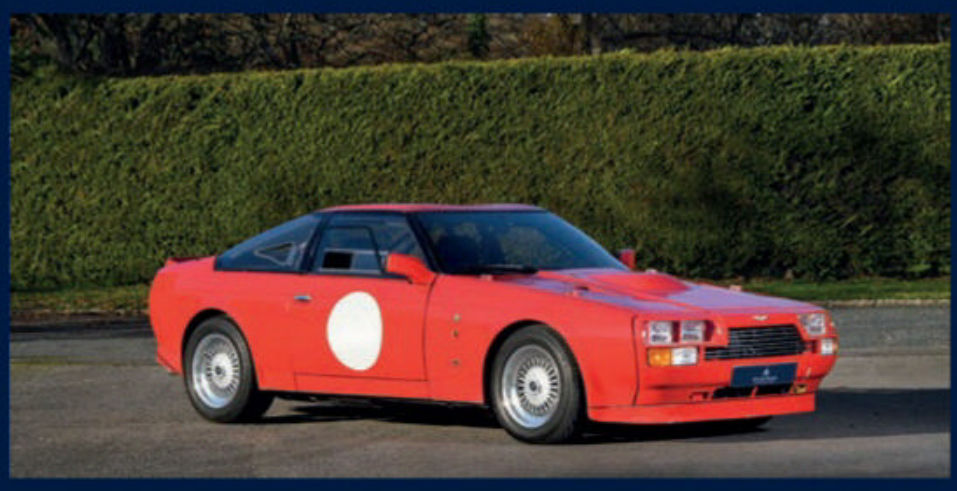
1964 Aston Martin DB5 Vantage



1966 Aston Martin DB6 Short Chassis Volante



1979 Aston Martin V8 Volante 7.0L



1986 Aston Martin V8 Vantage Zagato



2006 Aston Martin DBRS9



2012 Aston Martin One77

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CLASSIC DIARY

All the shows, festivals, tours, meets and races that matter

JANUARY

3-4 Exeter Trial Long-running car and 'bike rally in Devon *07941 328613; www.themotorcyclingclub.org.uk*

3-5 Planai-Classic Winter rally for pre-'72 cars around the Dachstein glacier in Austria *0043 3685 23270; www.planai-classic.at*

5 Sunday Scramble At Bicester Heritage, Oxon *01869 327928; www.bicesterheritage.co.uk*

9-12 Autosport International With a display to mark 70 years of the first Championship F1 race. NEC *08443 388000; autosportinternational.com*

10-12 Romania Historic Winter Rally 2020 In Brașov, Romania *0040 4 90 28 79 01; romania-historic-rally.com*

11-19 The Scottsdale auctions Barrett-Jackson (11-19), Worldwide (15), Russo and Steele (15-19), Bonhams (16), RM Sotheby's (16-17) and Gooding & Co (17-18) are all present in Arizona, USA *See p174*

12 La Traversée de Paris Hivernale 20th-anniversary staging of this classic run across the French capital *vincennesenanciennes.com*

12 Coffee & Chrome At Chateau Impney in Droitwich, Worcs *03332 076120; www.footmanjames.co.uk*

16-19 InterClassics Maastricht See *Pick of the month*

22-26 Palm Beach Cavallino Classic See *Pick of the month*

23-26 Winter Marathon Tricky rally through the Dolomites. Madonna di Campiglio, Italy *0039 030 827095; www.wintermarathon.it*

26 Mini Fair 2019 Everything Mini: club stands, a concours and more. Bingley Hall near Stafford, Staffs *01384 897779; britishminiclub.co.uk*

26 Malvern Drive-In Classic Car & Bike Autojumble Three Counties Showground in Malvern, Worcs *01484 667776; classicshows.org*

26-31 The Winter Trial 2500km rally across Czechia and Austria *0031 578 575100; www.thewintertrial.nl*

29-5/2 Rallye Monte-Carlo Historique With starts in several European cities, including Glasgow *00377 93 15 26 00; acm.mc*

30-2/2 Automotoretrò Massive show in Turin, Italy *0039 011 350 936; www.automotoretro.it*

31-2/2 Bremen Classic Motorshow Huge show with 650 exhibitors in eight halls. This year's lead feature is 'Rivals': think Mercedes 300SL vs BMW 507 and Porsche 959 vs Ferrari F40. Bremen, Germany *0049 421 3505525; www.classicmotorshow.de*

FEBRUARY

1-2 GP Ice Race Classics tackle the frozen track at Zell am See, Austria *www.gpicerace.com*

8-9 Leadfoot Festival Historic racing in Hahei, New Zealand *0064 7866 3120; www.leadfootfestival.com*

5-9 Rétromobile Superb Paris show covers everything from tanks to '90s Youngtimers *0033 1 76 77 11 11; www.retromobile.com*

7-9 Boca Raton Concours d'Elegance Charity concours marks Duesenberg's centenary. Florida, USA *001 954 537 1010; www.bocaratonconcours.com*

8-9 Great Western Classic Car Show Somerset bash at The Royal Bath & West Showground *01507 529529; gwa.bristolclassiccarshows.com*

9 International MG & Triumph Spares Day With dedicated classic parking. Stoneleigh Park, Warks *mgandtriumphsparesday.co.uk*

15 The Pomeroy Trophy Entertaining tests at Silverstone *www.vscc.co.uk*

20-23 The London Classic Car Show Capital event moves to Kensington *www.thelondonclassiccarshow.co.uk*

For full event listings, visit **www.classicandsportscar.com/calendar**

Pick of the month January



INTERCLASSICS MAASTRICHT
16-19 JANUARY

This Dutch show is firmly established as an early highlight of the European classic calendar, and this year's edition looks like being a particularly good one. The main theme is certainly intriguing: 'Forgotten Classics' will bring together 25 rare cars from dead marques including Talbot-Lago, Minerva, Hispano-Suiza, Pegaso, Bristol and Horch, all led by a stunning 1950 Studebaker Champion Regal Deluxe Starlight Coupe. With club displays, a Coys auction and more, there will be plenty to sink your teeth into. *0031 43 38 38 333; interclassicsmaastricht.nl*

CAVALLINO CLASSIC
22-26 JANUARY

It's possible there are now more glamorous concours in Florida than in the rest of the world combined, but even in a crowded field the Cavallino Classic stands out. This Palm Beach-based extravaganza is built around the twin highlights of a 140-car Ferrari concours and the more varied Classic Car Sunday show, with the latter paying tribute to Alfa Romeo on its 110th birthday – and it all takes place against a glorious backdrop of sun, sand and sea. *001 561 994 1345; cavallinoclassic.com*



Looking ahead



GOODWOOD MEMBERS' MEETING
28-29 MARCH

The smallest and most exclusive of Goodwood's big three – it's only open to GRRC Full and Fellowship members – is also the best for out-and-out racing. The 15 grids cover everything from pre-war Edwardian specials to '70s and '80s saloon cars, while one of the three demos stars F1 racers from 1970-'75. Let's hope the weather holds up, because Goodwood in the snow is no fun for single-seaters. *01243 755055; www.goodwood.com*

20-23/FEB/2020



THE LONDON CLASSIC CAR SHOW

The Capital's premier classic car show comes to Olympia, London.

This must-attend event for any discerning classic car owner, collector or connoisseur, offers you the opportunity to view and purchase from what promises to be one of the widest collections in the UK.

Tickets now available from thelondonclassiccarshow.co.uk

Stay up to date with the latest news



Early front-runners Bill Cleyndert and Leigh Powley retired with engine trouble in their Ford Model A Special

WILL BROADHEAD

JOGGERS BATTLE THE ELEMENTS

On 7 December, 82 crews from 10 countries took the start of HERO's gruelling silver jubilee Le Jog. But after four days, three nights, 1500 miles and very little sleep, just 64 saw the finish on 10 December – all had achieved something special and for 13 crews, clinching medal status was the icing on the cake.

The rally was testing from the off. Leg one, Land's End to Magor in Wales, brought chaos for the vintage contenders running at the front: six cars stopped together at different angles while trying to determine the correct route. Come the end of the leg, seven pairings provisionally had gold medals, six silver and nine bronze.

Driving rain and high winds battered entrants on leg two. An acute hairpin through a gate just wide enough for a vintage Bentley caught out many, and just a few miles shy of the finish in Ewloe, Flintshire, Thomas Bricknell and father Roger suffered a puncture in their 1983 Volkswagen Golf GTI. Still, they swapped their provisional silver medal for gold before the leg's end, one of eight crews in that uppermost echelon. Sadly, Bill Cleyndert and Leigh Powley, who also held gold-medal status, retired with their Ford Model A suffering a terminal engine problem.

A few hours' rest preceded the route to Gretna, featuring five tests and five regularities. As conditions deteriorated, life got particularly tough for the vintage crews with little or no protection from the weather. "The water is really deep and I have been thrown in, but we haven't made any massive errors," said Emily Anderson, navigating her father Stuart in a 1937 Bentley Derby 4¼-litre. "I am trying to concentrate, read the map and not look at any animals but it has been so wet that we just can't keep dry." Nevertheless, they started the final leg in contention for at least a silver.

The last push to John O'Groats gave crews just a two-hour break in 36 hours, with five tests and 11 regularities across two legs. It was described as "relentless" by navigator Andy Ballantyne, who was successfully paired with Stewart Christie in an MGB GT to land gold and Class 5 honours.

Joining them in claiming top awards were the Andersons, Paul Dyas/Martyn Taylor (Volvo Amazon), Kevin Haselden/Gary Evans (Mini Cooper 'S'), Richard Boughton/Paul Bosdet (BMW 2002tii) and Eric Michiels/Aswin Pyck (Porsche 924S).

Four further crews secured silver medals, and a trio of hard-fought bronzes were handed out.

'As conditions deteriorated, life got particularly tough for the vintage crews with little or no protection from the wind and driving rain'



Kevin Haselden and Gary Evans overcame mechanical woes to join the gold medal winners in their Mini Cooper 'S'



The BMW 2002tii of Richard Boughton and navigator Paul Bosdet took gold and a class win



PAUL LAWRENCE

Two on the bounce and a hard-fought win for duo Marty McCormack and Barney Mitchell



Pritchard/Clarke had to settle for second



Bean/Thompson Cortina was top in pre-'68

McCormack's hat-trick on RAC

After four and a half days and 31 special stages, Marty McCormack and Barney Mitchell won the Roger Albert Clark Rally for the second successive time from 21-25 November, after a relentless tussle with Jason Pritchard/Phil Clarke.

The Ford Escort Mk2 duel topped the rally's 13th edition, as 126 crews were pitched against 300 competitive miles in the forests of Wales, Northumberland and southern Scotland. Dauntingly long stages in 'killer Kielder' and, at times, thick fog added to the challenge – simply seeing the finish was a mammoth achievement.

McCormack became the first driver to win the rally three times, having first claimed victory in 2012. "It's been a true team effort and I'd like to give a huge thanks to all of the fans and supporters out there cheering us on in the stages," said the delighted winner. "There really isn't another rally like it."

Roger Chilman/Patrick Walsh took third, while 82-year-old Bob Bean and co-driver Captain Thompson (Lotus Cortina) won Category 1 for pre-'68 cars.

Those out of luck included Alan Walker and John Connor, who came fourth overall in 2017. This time around a fuel line detached itself from their Ford Escort Mk2 early in the opening Radnor stage, and only fire extinguishers loaned by following crews saved the car.

Paddock profile
INGE VAN WORTEL



Car *1933 Austin Seven single-seater 'Pea Green Special'*
Series *VSCC hillclimbs*

"I've only just started – my first hillclimb was in 2019 at Wiscombe. Dad and Mum race, so with Dad's help I had a go, and I fell in love with it. I've only done four events and I am hooked, I can't imagine living without it. I've met so many nice people – the VSCC has an encouraging community, which makes it a lot of fun. I liked Loton Park the best – I won prizes for fastest young driver and second in handicap. I've heard Chateau Impney is good, so maybe I'll compete there in 2020."



DENNIS RUSHTON

ESCORTS DOMINATE IRISH EPIC

Rob Duggan and Ger Conway edged an event-long battle with World Rally Championship stars Craig Breen and Paul Nagle by just 14 secs to claim victory on Ireland's Rentokil Initial Killarney Historic Rally on 30 November, having led from start to finish. And it was an all-Ford Escort podium, with 2018 winners Owen Murphy and Anthony Nestor third. Neil Williams/Anthony O'Sullivan were the top overseas crew in fourth, while Colin O'Donoghue/Sean Collins won the Modified class – both in Escorts.



TREVOR FOSTER

Duggan/Conway clung on to victory



CHARLIE WOODING

Stuart Beare piloted his Cannon to take a first overall historic trial victory in West Malling

Kentish nip-and-tuck trial

Eight tough sections entertained the 55 entrants for Kentish Border Car Club's Monty Peters Historic Sporting Trial on 7 December – and competition was fierce.

Mark Howse (Impunity) and Andy Gowen (Facksimile) engaged in their customary Post Historic battle, and by the end of the second lap neither had dropped a mark. Matters were even more intense in the Historic class: after a lap, Stuart Beare (Cannon), Paul Faulkner (Paul Special), John Fack (Cannon) and Ian Wright (Cannon) had only lost a mark each, before engine issues hampered Fack and Wright.

When Gowen cleared a slippery Section Six and Howse lost three marks, the Post Historic trophy was decided. In the Historic class, Beare was top from Faulkner and Stuart Roach (Alexis). Not only that, but Beare also secured his maiden Best Overall historic sporting trial victory.



HSCC SHAKES UP FOR 2020

The Historic Sports Car Club has broadened its Historic Touring Car classes for 2020 to permit 1300cc Austin A30s, A35s, A40s and Morris Minors to race, and launched a new '80s single-seater category, too. See hscc.org.uk



LONG LIVE THE LEGENDS

Prodrive has unveiled a new programme to restore and authenticate its more than 1100 historic race and rally cars. Called Prodrive Legends, it includes works-spec engine rebuilds. See prodrive.com/prodrive-legends

AUTOMOTIVE DEPARTMENT

NOW INVITING CONSIGNEMENTS

The Automotive Department is selecting cars to insert its upcoming auctions:

PORSCHE & FRIENDS - April 2020

1000 FINARTE and ***BRESCIA FINARTE*** - May 2020



Alfa Romeo 6C 2500 Sport (Pinin Farina) del 1947.
Sold for € 639,059



Porsche Twins IDEM 911 Targa S del 1968
e Porsche 991.2 Targa 4S del 2018. Sold for € 639,059

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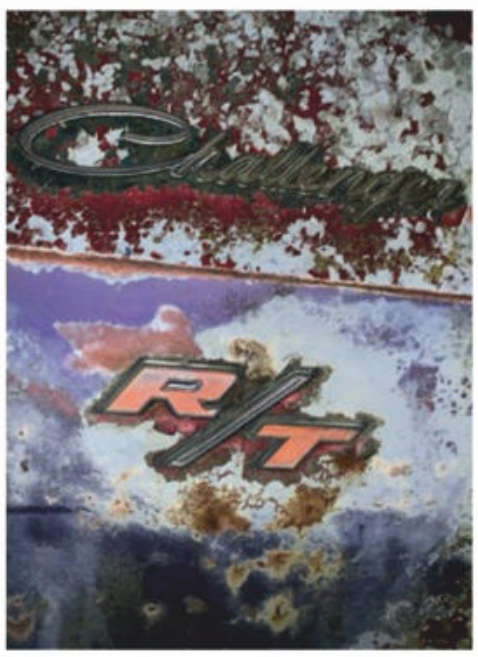
OFFICIAL PARTNER:

CREDIT SUISSE



Extensive corrosion has taken over during the Challenger's 34-year slumber

RARE DODGE POSES A CHALLENGE



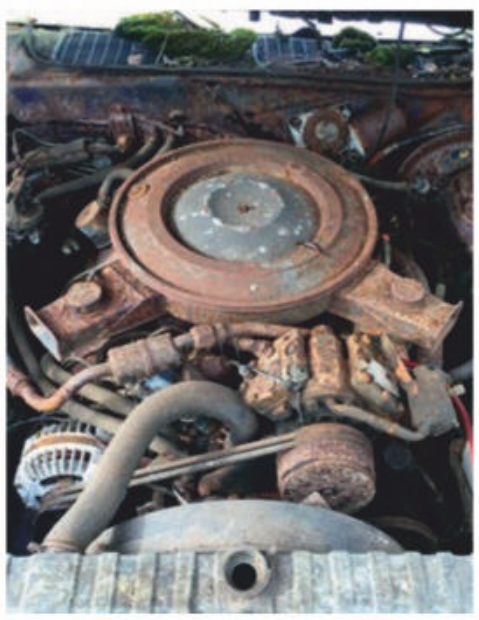
Long-term Dodge fan Richard Washer of Performance Cars London has unearthed the Holy Grail for MOPAR enthusiasts: a 1970 Dodge Challenger R/T SE 383 Magnum in the fabulously period Plum Crazy. "I stumbled upon it by chance a few months ago in sleepy north Essex," he says. "I saw something shiny glinting in the sun, through a hedge. I got out of the car, peered through – then nearly fell over when I realised it was a '70 R/T Challenger. I went straight to the front door and bought it on the spot!"

The elderly owner's memory is poor, but the car is thought to have been sitting for more than 34 years: "He bought it on a whim in the late '70s or early '80s in south London, and used to commute to his factory in Hackney in it. He had spare steel Rallye wheels fitted with Firestone Town and Country tyres, so he could get through the snow! We're not sure why he stopped using it."

Being a rare 1970-only SE, it has the small 'formal' rear window, SE roof-pillar badges, a black vinyl roof (now all but gone), unique door cards and an overhead console, plus a few other extras. Its 383cu in motor is to Magnum spec, so it has a hotter cam than standard. This car also boasts desirable options including four electric windows, power brakes and steering, tinted glass, bumper overriders, a three-speaker dash, aluminium fender trims and two mirrors. It's thought to be one of around 500 in this spec, of which probably just half survive.

"There is no trace of it on the DVLA system, but XOW 304J is a Southampton issue," adds Washer. "At some stage it's been in a whack, because someone has fitted a light-blue front fender and door. The body sides are metallic red, with the original Plum Crazy on the hood and trunk lid, which also features a desert oasis mural."

Do you remember it? If so, email bmw3litrecsl@gmail.com



The Dodge's Magnum-spec 383cu in V8



Top: telltale badge. Below: little remains of the vinyl roof



Tina Charles 8-Track was still in the player



The Lincoln with Dr Prahl's widow just before it was put on to the transporter



LeBaron is thought to be one of three left



Fresh from extraction and ready for the off

College cabriolet's graduation

While working for Brewster, Ray Dietrich and Tom Hibbard were itching to strike out on their own in the coachbuilding world. In 1920 the duo formed LeBaron Carrosseries, more often known simply as LeBaron. Seven years later, the company was taken over by Briggs and moved to Detroit.

Shawn Miller of Significant Cars in Indianapolis has recently found a 1934 Lincoln KB Convertible Coupe by LeBaron, one of only four of this model thought to survive. Its early history is not known, but in the 1950s it was purchased in Rochester, New York, by Dr Helmut Prahl for use when he was at college. Early in his career he moved around, eventually putting the Lincoln out to grass. A rudimentary shed was built around three sides of the car, but during the following 30 years vandalism and the winter weather took their toll.

> "I retrieved it and showed it still with all of the dust and racoon nests in it!"

In 1992, the family moved to Door County, Wisconsin, and took the Lincoln with them. It was put into a nice, dry garage and Dr Prahl had every intention of restoring it, but this never happened. Miller bought the car from his widow.

"Two days after I retrieved it, I took it to the Classic Car Club of America Indiana Grand Classic event, still with all of the dust and racoon nests in it," Miller remembers. "This was the first – and possibly the last! – time that such a barn-find has been presented at this judged event!"





Resting in a shed in the south of England, this very early Ginetta is solid, if in need of TLC. Right: the G2's 1172cc Ford engine

EARLY KIT EMERGES

In 2019, the Ginetta world was surprised to hear of a rare G2 that had been in a shed for more than 40 years. Launched in '58, the G2 was Ginetta's first production model, and RDN 301 was first registered that August, making it almost certainly one of the first 10 Ginettas. Only three older cars are known to survive.

Owner Richard Curry inherited it on the death of his father, who bought it as a runner in Southampton in the mid-'70s. It has suffered in storage, but remains solid and is very original.

"In the early '90s I was contacted by the original owner, a Dr Stevenson," says Trevor Pyman, Ginetta Owners' Club registrar. "He asked if we knew if his old car survived. I told him it was unlikely, and it wasn't known to the club. He'd used the car in sprints and autotests, before selling in around '63." Pyman is keen to hear from Stevenson, plus any other owners, so the car's history can be completed. Email registrar@ginetta.org

Look familiar?

Want to track down a lost love or looking for history on your current classic? Send details and pictures to the p10 address or email your requests to **alastair.clements@haymarket.com**



FILM-STAR FORD?

John Peters owns a prototype '66 Crayford convertible Ford Cortina Mk2, SOO 661D. He wants to trace previous owner Alan Higgins of Windsor and any other history. It's thought to have been in a film, but no one recalls its title. Email jon.flora@btinternet.com



QUATTRO QUERY

In 1984 Grant Manning, who now lives in Australia, bought a new Audi quattro from a south London dealer. He enjoyed some 65,000 miles of motoring in C210 SPE, and now wonders if it survives to this day. Email grant@waypointdesign.com.au



NAME THAT SHOW!

Richard Curry has a Panther Rio Especial first owned by Prince Faisal Addulah Alsaud. "I've been told the car was used by Jimmy Greaves for a TV programme," says Curry, who would love to know the name of the programme and find any images from it. Email curryclan@hotmail.co.uk



MICHAEL WARE
Former curator of the National Motor Museum, Beaulieu. Send submissions to waremichael29@gmail.com





Woodie was once the 19th hole on wheels

How many Austin A125 Sheerlines were turned into shooting brakes by coachbuilder Harold Radford remains unknown, but there can't have been many. One of these rare machines was recently salvaged by Tim Glover of Stamford. "I've always had a soft spot for woodies," hs says, "and when this 1952 car crept up I couldn't let it pass."

Last taxed in 1982, the Sheerline woodie was badly damaged, but when Glover found the missing keys under the headlining they opened a mountain of information.

"There was a keyring with an old phone number for The Chelsea Workshop in London," he explains. "I called them and they told me they had bought the car in 2000 for hotel and golf course owner Peter de Savary. He had commissioned the firm to find a large woodie that he could turn into a mobile bar for use on one of his golf courses.

"It was initially used at Stapleford Park in Leicestershire, then some time later was shipped to the USA, where it was used for the same purpose in Rhode Island, NY."

Clockwise from above left: Sheerline's squashed front end; rear was very badly damaged; the missing parts came with the car, including the numberplate



Glover got in touch with de Savary, who recognised the Austin and told him that the car had broken free inside its container while being shipped back to the UK. It shunted back and forth over and over again, hence the extensive damage. It was then sold to a collector, but never restored.

Now Glover plans to rebuild it at last: "It's in a bad way, but I want to do a sympathetic restoration. I've had the car running and driven it around the yard – it seems very sound… mechanically, at least."



Clockwise: sad remains of the rare Alvis Silver Crest; cleaned up with body removed; shell is in a sorry state





Alvis Silver Crest has lost its lustre

Ernest Litera recently retired from his job as vehicle tester for the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria, Australia. He has owned a 1958 MGA and a 1973 Holden Monaro, but had a hankering for a vintage car and was invited by his friend Dale Parcel to drive a Silver Eagle on the Alvis Centenary Tour. He loved it, and was inspired when the club president showed him murky images of a 1936 Alvis Silver Crest. "It was in desperate need of rescue," says Litera, "having languished for years in a Montrose yard."

Litera went to see the car: "It was in a sad state. The engine, 'box and steering were all locked solid from years in the open. The Holbrook saloon body was scorched by a bushfire, devoid of any salvageable timber framing or trim, and for the most part destroyed by tinworm."

A modest price was agreed, and the lady owner said: "You'll want all the other bits in the lock-up." This included four usable doors among many random parts. The Silver Crest will shortly move into the workshop for restoration to begin.

FLAT BROKE FLAT-FOUR

The original Porsche 911 arrived in 1964 and remained in production for more than 30 years. The 912 was a cheaper alternative, with a 1582cc flat-four engine and a four-speed gearbox. In 1966, an American living in Amsterdam purchased a new 912 from Pon's Automobielhandel. When he went home to Cleveland, Ohio, he took the European-spec 912 with him.

In 1972 it developed a gearbox problem and was sidelined in a corner of the garage, where it lay for 47 years until Frank Sajjad of MB Vintage Cars of Cleveland was able to buy it and offer it for sale.



The 912 as found by MB Vintage Cars

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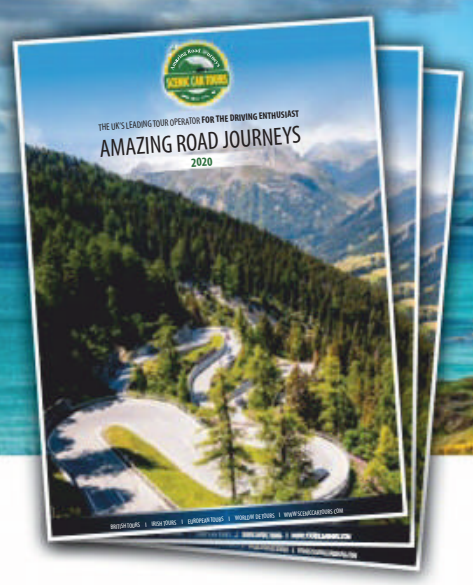


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John Neale's 1938 Hudson Terraplane when it was complete and in regular use







Clockwise from above: RHD car was sold new in the UK; grandson Elliott is keen to see Hudson saved; flathead out for V8 swap

Stripped American beauty seeks salvation

You might not associate a single garage in a quiet Oxfordshire town with a streamlined 1930s American classic, but behind the up-and-over door of this prefab unit lies a 1938 Hudson Terraplane – an original right-hand-drive car, complete with Art Deco-style front end.

Wendy and John Neale bought the Hudson after missing their first example terribly when they sold it. They used the car regularly, including for some slightly peculiar animal transportation. "John used to take the dogs out in it for their walks," Wendy explains. "But there was the parrot, too…" The African Grey rode in it, attracting some very odd looks from locals.

John wasn't a fan of the flathead 'six', and in a bid to make the car more usable he decided to order a smallblock V8 from Real Steel and took the car off the road in early 2019. He removed the original motor and transmission, bracing the underside and modifying the floor to take the new power unit.

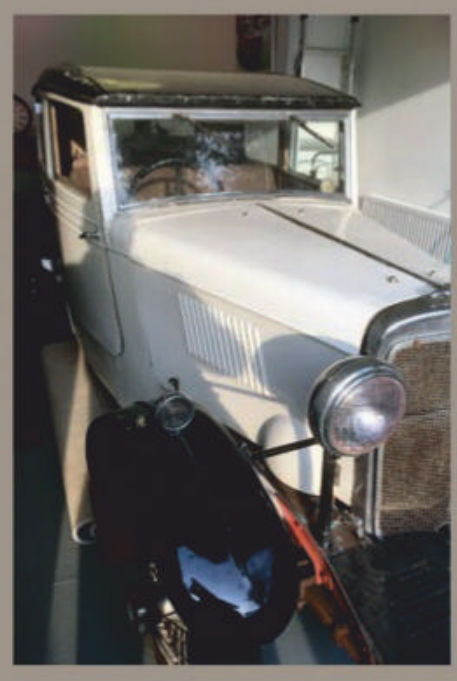
Tragically, on the day the custom V8 was ready for collection John passed away, leaving his beloved Hudson in bits in the garage. The V8 order was kindly cancelled by the supplier, but the family has now decided that the car needs a new owner who will return it to the road, ideally with the flathead fitted once more. "Although John was going to fit the V8, we would like it to go to someone who will celebrate its originality," says Wendy.

The car is all there and, apart from its state of disassembly, is in beautiful condition. The chassis appears to be near perfect and the older respray needs nothing more than a polish. The car even has its original travelling trunk in the boot, complete with twin drawers.

The engine looks complete but will likely need an overhaul, and the original ancillaries have all been carefully stored along with other parts John removed in anticipation of the engine swap – including the sections of floor he had begun to modify. If you are interested in taking on this straightforward project, offers are being invited via hudsonterraplane38@gmail.com



The Standard pictured in c1967. Right: the Avon cleaned up well, but needs a full rebuild



AVON CALLING OUT FOR FULL RESTORATION

The New Avon Coachbuilding Company of Warwick made bodies for Lea-Francis, among others, before building special coachwork on Austin Seven chassis. When the Jensen brothers were commissioned by Standard to build a body for the 9hp chassis, they took the design to New Avon, starting a relationship between the firm and Standard.

Warwickshire-based Colin Clatworthy owns the last remaining 1931 two-door 2+2 Standard Special with Avon coachwork. Registered in Dorset as TK 6978, the car's early history is not known, but by 1958 it was with a Mr Stammers.

"According to the previous owner's daughter, the Standard was given to her father in 1967 by the late Air Commodore Buckle, who was an early member of the Lancia Motor Club," says Clatworthy, who bought the car in "very used condition" after it had passed through an auction house and two dealers. He had every intention of restoring the Avon, but health problems now mean it is for sale; email colinclatworthy@hotmail.com



Rotten Jensen will be an ambitious rebuild

Interceptor returns to nature

Robert Kenn has found a c1968 Jensen Interceptor that has been parked for years in an industrial area in Brookvale, Sydney. There is a tree embedded in its nose that has either grown while the car has been there, or the Jensen drove into it. "The Interceptor must have been imported into Australia a few years into its life," says Kenn, "because cars here tend to have little rust unless they are parked right near a beach. The rear of the Jensen will need more than just a bit of filler!"

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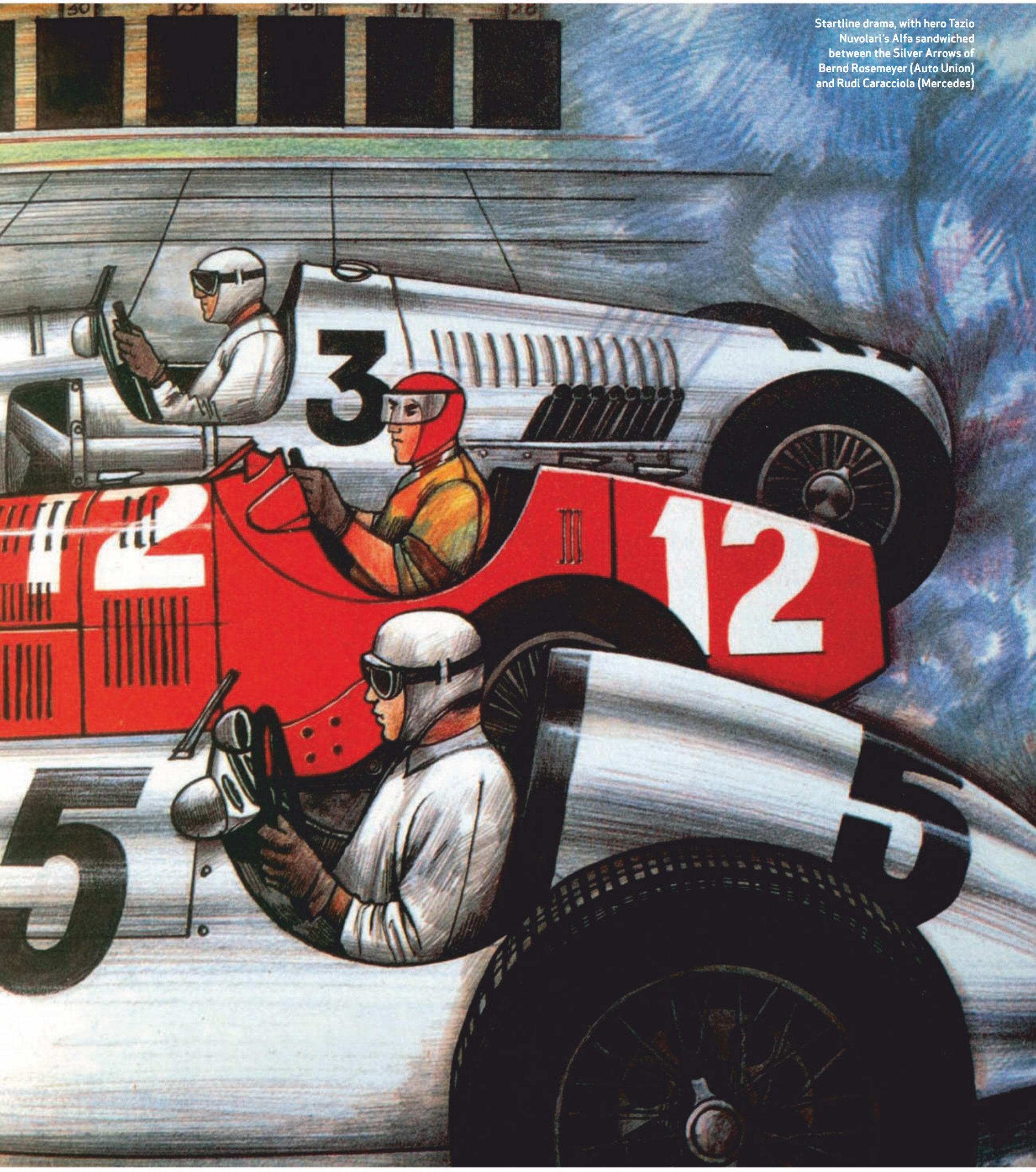
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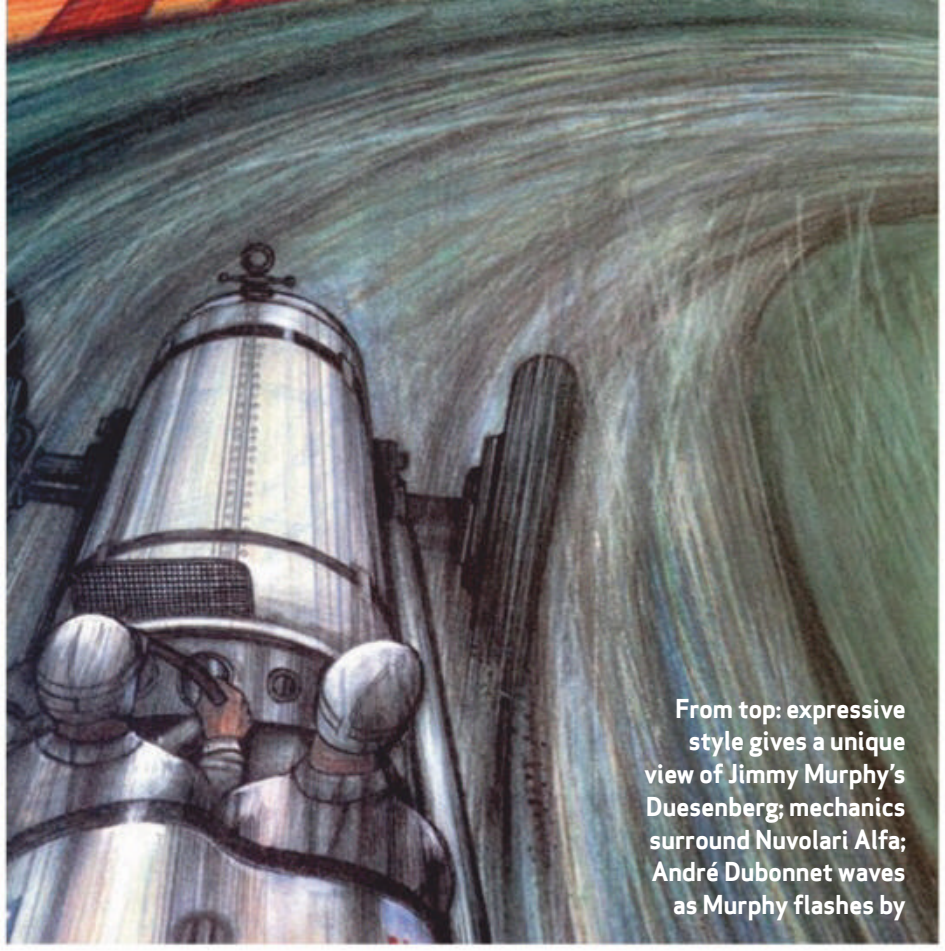
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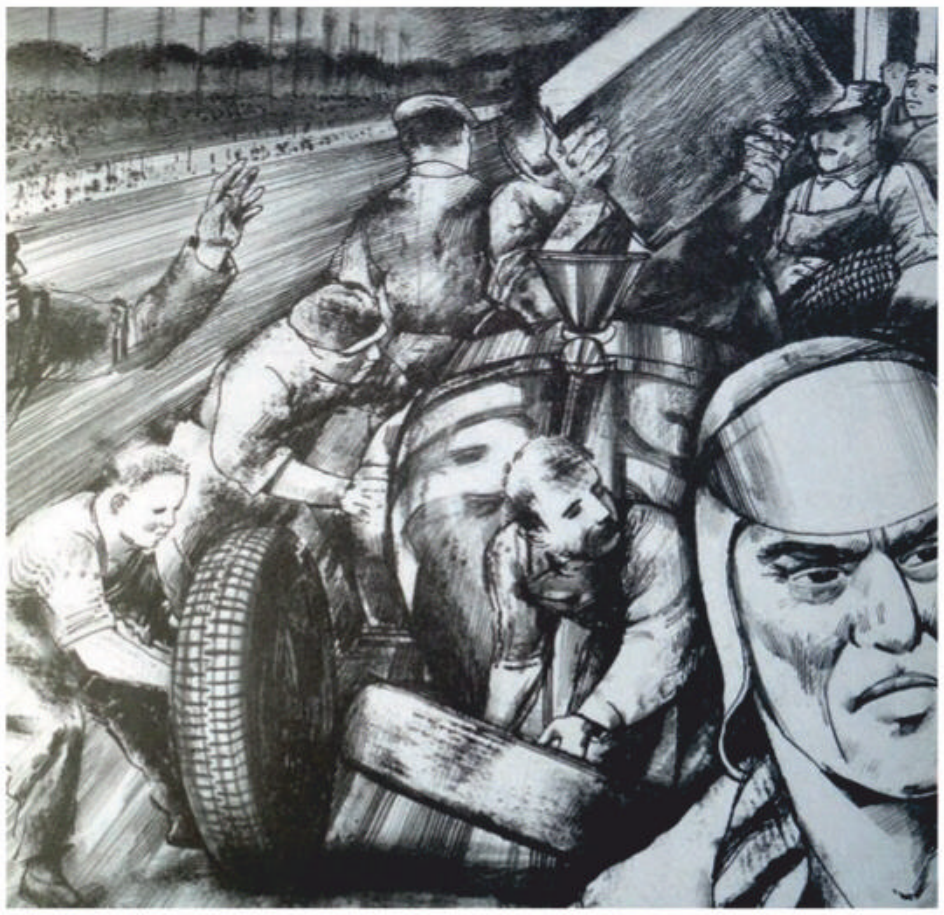
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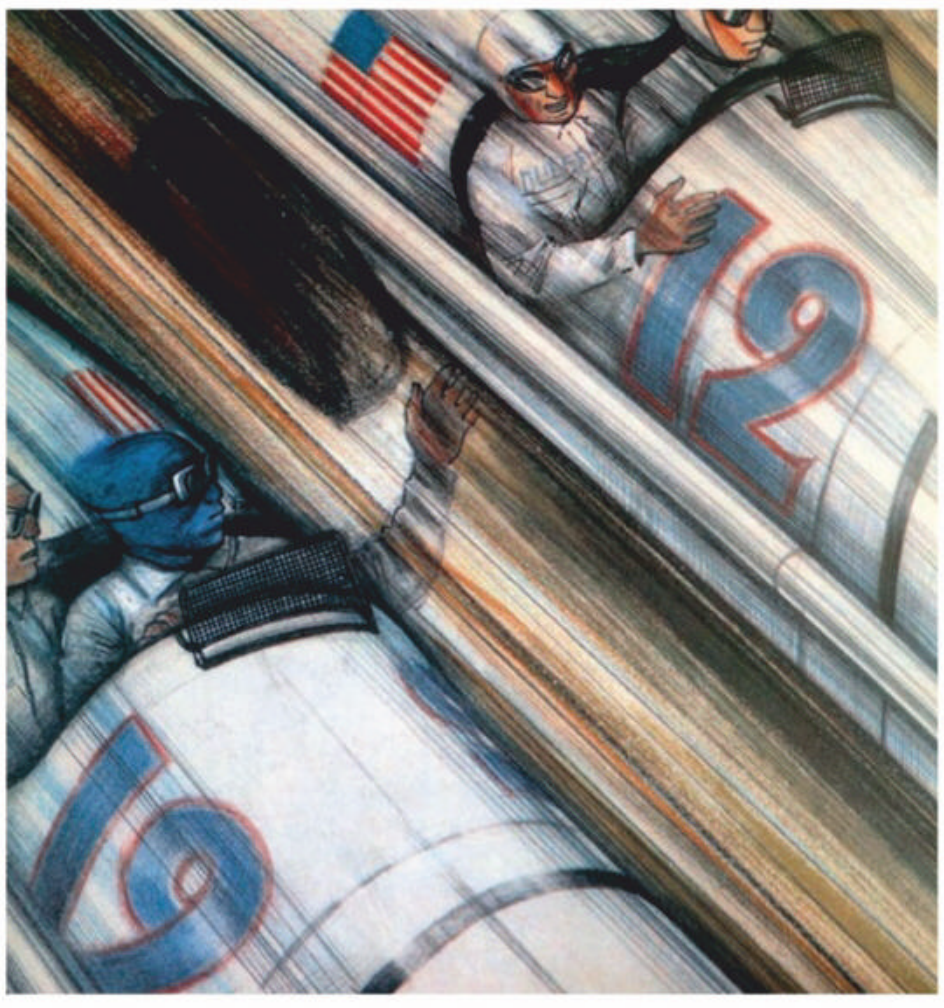
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Startline drama, with hero Tazio Nuvolari's Alfa sandwiched between the Silver Arrows of Bernd Rosemeyer (Auto Union) and Rudi Caracciola (Mercedes)







From top: expressive style gives a unique view of Jimmy Murphy's Duesenberg; mechanics surround Nuvolari Alfa; André Dubonnet waves as Murphy flashes by

MOTORING ART

RAYMOND BRIGGS

This famous children's book illustrator was once inspired by motorsport legends

It seems improbable today but in 1968 Raymond Briggs, the creator of children's classic *The Snowman*, teamed up with author Bruce Carter for a series of junior books on speed legends. Carter had already had success with *Speed Six*, a story about a vintage Bentley that is modified to race again after WW2, and *The Airfield Man*. With the support of Richard Hough at Champion Books, six titles about dramatic 20th-century adventurers were conceived with one award-winning illustrator in mind.

The books are so far the only occasion when Briggs has agreed to draw non-fictional subjects, but he was clearly inspired by the endeavours of brave men battling unpromising odds. As well as Charles Lindbergh, Manfred von Richthofen, Ernest Shackleton and Edmund Hillary, the set featured two pre-war motorsport legends. *Nuvolari and the Alfa Romeo* focused on the famous Italian's win against the Silver Arrows with the outdated Tipo B *monoposto* in the 1935 German Grand Prix, while *Jimmy Murphy and the White Duesenberg* related the American's historic victory in the 1921 French GP.

Briggs' distinctive style revealed a genuine feel for the subject, his skilful pencil work capturing both the likenesses of Nuvolari and Murphy and the on-track drama. The expressive lines and textures that became such a feature of his later books were used to great effect, be it depicting speed around a wet Nürburgring or the isolation of blinding fog across the Atlantic.

Briggs' biographer Nicolette Jones relates that the German fighter ace Richthofen was one subject in the series that the artist wasn't comfortable with, and he later revealed his anti-war stance in *When the Wind Blows*.

The six books are now rare, but when American historic racer Joe Freeman – who is best known for returning the fabulous Thorn Sparks Indycar to the track – discovered the series, he decided it was time they were revived. His Racemaker Press has beautifully reprinted the two motorsport titles.

Born in London in 1934, Briggs' talent was clear from an early age. When evacuated during WW2, his letters home were vividly illustrated and his ambitions to become a cartoonist led to art school, first at Wimbledon and later the illustrious Slade. Like many aspiring artists in the post-war years, Briggs initially worked in advertising, but began illustrating children's books for Oxford University Press between commercial work. In 1966 his drawings for the nursery rhyme volume *The Mother Goose Treasury* won a Kate Greenaway Medal and from there his reputation as an innovative illustrator took off.

Briggs continued to work with authors, but in the '70s he created his own books, *Father Christmas* and *The Snowman*, which brought international fame. Never one to hide from the darker side of life, he turned to such subjects as the Cold War, and the tragedy of losing his parents and wife to cancer. In his latest work, *Time for Lights Out*, the 85-year-old contemplates old age and death in his unique style. **MW**

The Murphy and Nuvolari Collection is priced at $25 (racemaker.com); Time for Lights Out is published by Jonathan Cape, priced at £18.99



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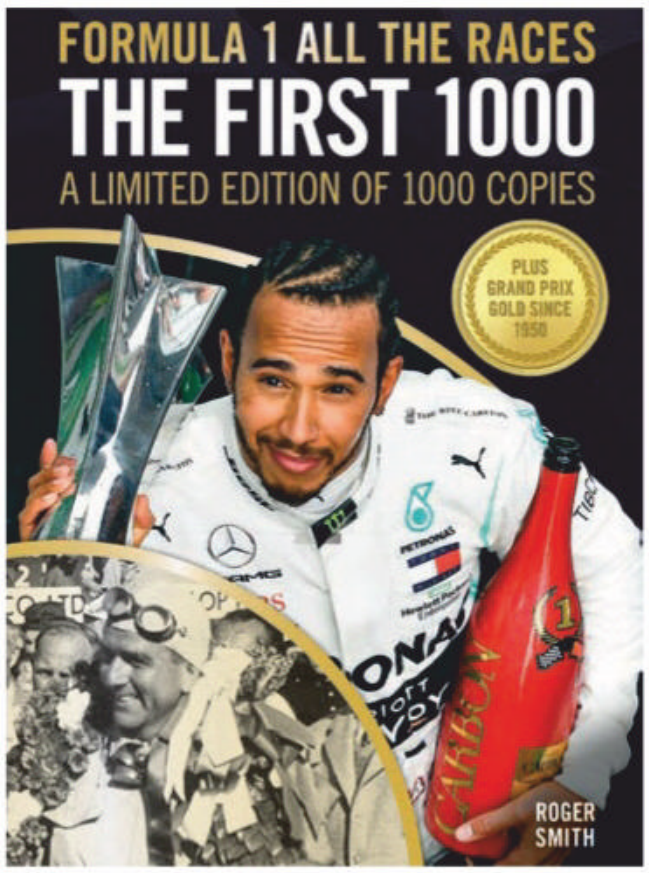
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Book of the month



F1 ALL THE RACES: THE FIRST 1000

The (in)famous 1000th Grand Prix. For some it had already happened, even before the 2019 Chinese Grand Prix was claimed to be it in April. There were caveats aplenty because, if nothing else, Grands Prix pre-date the World Championship. For others we're still awaiting the 1000th, deleting the Indy 500s and the F2 races of the early 1950s. Regardless, Formula One pinned its '1000th Grand Prix to Count Towards the Formula One World Championship' flag in China and one upshot is this special limited-edition version of *Formula 1 All The Races* by self-claimed student of F1 Roger Smith.

Stretching to 720 pages, from World Championship race one, at Silverstone in 1950, to Shanghai, this is no drab, race-by-race, number-by-number slog. Instead, Smith has injected his passion for an easy-to-read nostalgia-fest.

It feels not of its time, but a pre-internet resource that would be cherished by enthusiasts and carried from circuit to circuit by the F1 hacks of yore. There is joy in that. Who needs Google when you have an easy-access chronological hardback that has everything exactly where you expect it?

Each race is rated into Gold, Silver, Bronze, Black and White. Races marred by tragedy are Black, while White is 'travesties' – think those Indy 500s, and races such as at Monza in 1960 when the Brits boycotted, and Indy again in 2002 and 2005.

Season snapshots introduce each year, with the chapters concluding on 'facts and folklore'. At times dry, they combine for a consumable brief to complement the race snippets. At others there are gems: consider that, but for three Silverstone laps, Jim Clark led from start to finish in six of his seven 1963 wins; or the absolute dominance of Niki Lauda in 1974, despite finishing fourth to title-winner Emerson Fittipaldi (338 laps led to Emmo's 77!).

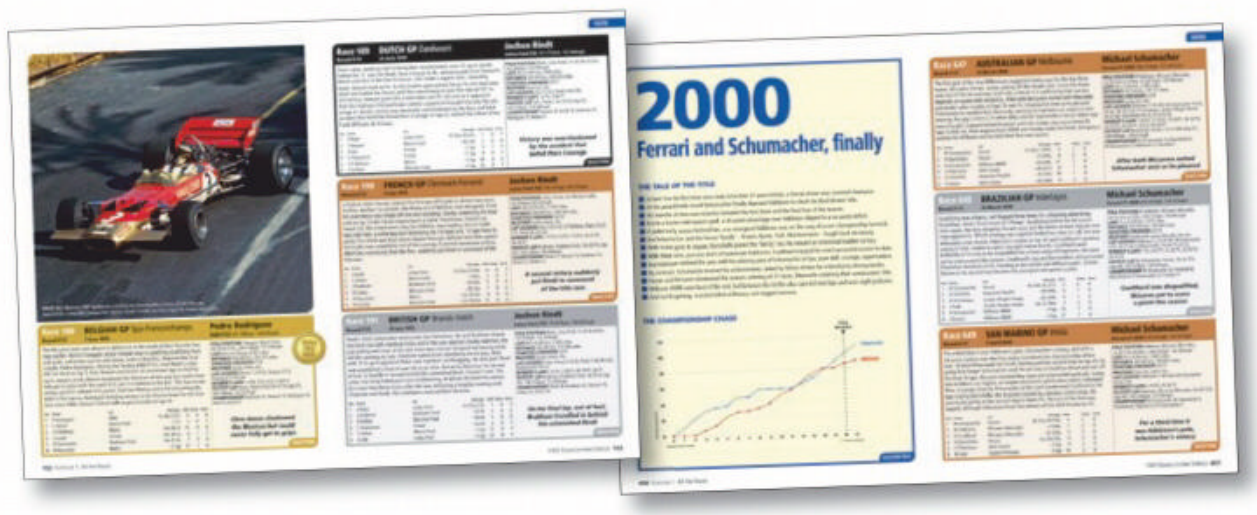
Illustrated by the familiar photos from Motorsport Images, all 1000 come with a 'race pod' that lists each contest's vital statistics – many of which you didn't know you needed. The eventual winner's simplified lap chart (Jenson Button's 2011 Canadian Grand Prix win is especially illuminating) and each race's effect on the championship top five are cases in point. They are then condensed into Smith's curated 'collections' at the end, an index of sorts bringing together 'thrillers', plus 'back to front' and similar themes for reference.

The 1000th-race contention is addressed at the book's close, along with a neat table collating the grading system, confirming what we all thought to be true: half of the 1000 Grands Prix have been average. But, the Gold 13% is worth waiting for.

Restricted to 1000 copies, there shouldn't be many left before too long at this price. **JP**

£65 Roger Smith, Veloce. ISBN 9781787115668

'All 1000 come with a "race pod" that lists each contest's vital statistics – with many you didn't know you needed'





Dino Days

Despite its title, this isn't just about Dinos. Instead, the author shares his and his family's life in classic cars, Dino included, rendering the chapters about Enzo Ferrari's son Dino, the engines, cars and media reaction scattered throughout somewhat anomalous. Still, this self-published, enthusiast tome is anecdotal, affectionate and honest, if a touch verbose and self-indulgent, with a quality feel that belies the price-tag. All profits raised go to the brilliant Sporting Bears Motor Club, which was a worthy winner at the C&SC Club Awards 2019. **LP**

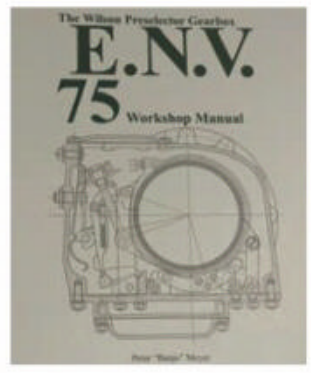
£30 Phill Brigstock, Upfront Publishing. ISBN 9781784566500



Lamborghini Murciélago

If this really is the first standalone book about the Murciélago, as it claims, it's long overdue; that it takes five chapters to get to the model itself is another surprise. However, that is a useful prequel to an exhaustively thorough account of the car, its design and engineering, the people behind it, living with one, expert buying advice, plus press road tests. For completists it seemingly has everything, in one highly accessible package, but it is quite heavy going. **LP**

£60 Thillainathan Pathmanathan, Veloce. ISBN 9781845849221



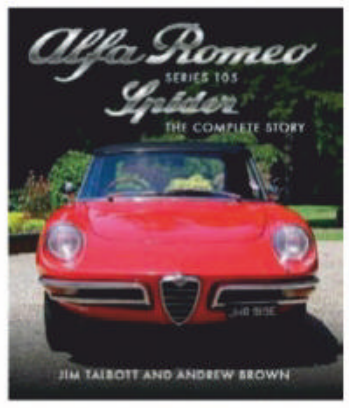
E.N.V. 75

You don't get a lot more niche than a workshop manual for the Wilson preselector gearbox, but you suspect that this will be a must for owners. It is presented in a ringbinder with tough paper and a DVD of original factory drawings, and is easy to navigate and understand with practical advice, clear exploded diagrams and full-colour imagery. You'll still need to be brave to tackle DiY work, but it's more useful than a glass of Dutch courage before you begin. **AC**

€88 Peter Meyer, PBM Engineering. ISBN 9783000634857



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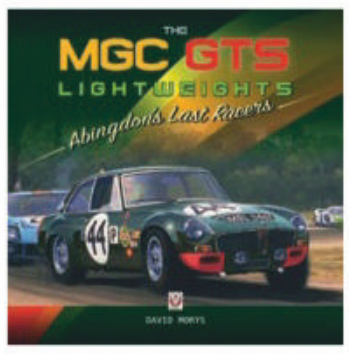
Alfa Romeo Series 105 Spider

Alfa Romeo enthusiasts Jim Talbott and Andrew Brown offer a different take on the usual 105/115 Series book format, steering away from in-depth histories of the models' development and instead focusing on the ownership experience.

Early chapters briefly cover the firm's history to 1966 and its design concepts, with the meat of the book dedicated to the Spiders – from the Duetto through to the Series 4. Each model section includes press extracts and interviews with owners and specialists, while the final chapter offers buying advice. Technical specifications are covered in some depth, with attention paid to the numerous subtle differences and changes that took place over the years: useful if you're on the hunt for a Spider and feeling confused. And it's well illustrated throughout.

Overall, the book falls somewhere between a historical record and an upmarket buyer's guide, best suited to those who are considering purchasing a Spider but first want to learn more. The 'Complete Story' tag may leave some history buffs feeling short-changed. **GM**

£25 Jim Talbott and Andrew Brown, The Crowood Press. ISBN 9781785006494



The MGC GTS Lightweights

Much has been written about MG cars and their place in the British public's hearts. This delves into the murky final hurrah of the racing branch under the obdurate stewardship of British Leyland.

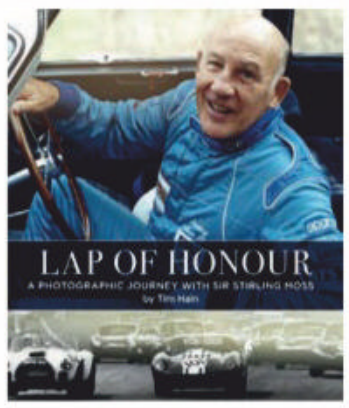
The MGC was supposed to reignite the British car buyer's passion for its beloved octagon-badged hero, but the project was doomed from the start due to the usual conservatism, under-development and general apathy towards the new model.

The six-cylinder was to be shared with the Austin 3 Litre saloon, so was never going to set the streets or race tracks alight, especially tipping the scales at 567lb. Consequently the MGC suffered from wayward handling and, even though it was subsequently developed, it was too late to save it from the axe after fewer than 10,000 cars.

As it turned out, only two MGC GTS Lightweights were ever built by the Competitions Department at Abingdon. This book details the history of both cars and their short racing careers, starting at the 1967 Targa Florio and ending with the 1969 12 Hours of Sebring, where Paddy Hopkirk and Andrew Hedges scored its best result of 15th.

The final two official works cars had brief and unspectacular moments on track, but in this passion project author David Morys has managed to be surprisingly honest and well balanced when dealing with the many vices and the rare high points. **DC**

£35 David Morys, Veloce. ISBN 9781787114456



Lap of honour

Yet another book about Sir Stirling Moss, but this one is different. Tim Hain is a professional blues guitarist and friend of Stirling and wife Susie, and an excellent amateur photographer. Stirling himself says: "I'm amazed he has never held a press pass." Almost all of it covers Moss' recent career in historics, with lovely paddock and people shots, and good action stuff. The text is the fruit of hours of chat, opinions and anecdotes from The Man, plus tributes from a host of friends – from Jochen Mass to Mark Knopfler, Mark Webber to Jay Leno. A very personal book about one man's friendship, and for a well-printed large-format 416-pager it's excellent value. **ST**

£45 Tim Hain, Pitch Publishing. ISBN 9781785315558

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Model of the month



1973 JAGUAR XJ12-PF

Matrix, 1:43, £95.99

From Michelotti D-type coupé to Labroke Avon XJ estate, Matrix has plugged some unusual gaps for Jaguar model collectors with its inspired 1:43 range of coachbuilt specials and styling prototypes. The latest is the 1973 Pininfarina-bodied Jaguar XJ12, which is offered in silver or (as here) bronze.

The Turin *carrozzeria* was approached by British Leyland to style the upcoming Project XJ40 and the Italian Jaguar was unveiled at the 1973 Earls Court show, but was ultimately passed over in favour of the in-house effort after Jaguar management decided the crisp look was too much of a departure.

Matrix also produces Pininfarina's 1978 XJ Spider, which was designed as successor to the E-type.

1:18

1 BBR's Steve McQueen Ferrari 275GTS/4 NART Spyder, £399.99
2 Schuco's Volkswagen Midlands Centre VW T1A with Beetle shell, £249.99
3 Cult's 1990 Jaguar XJR-15, £176.99
4 Matrix's 1960 Ferrari 250GTE, £261.99
5 Schuco's Porsche 911 'Röhrl x911', £172.99

1:43

6 Norev's 1974 Citroën DS23 Safari, £44.99
7 Norev's 1959 NSU Prinz, £39.99
8 Oxford's Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud, £24.99
9 Norev's 1988 Peugeot 205 Rallye, £39.99
10 Minichamps' Michael Schumacher 1991 Belgian GP Jordan 191, £74.99
11 Neo's 1952 Cunningham C3, £84.99

Edited by Mick Walsh. Unless stated, all items are available from Diecast Legends (08448 878888; www.diecastlegends.com); 10% discount for orders from C&SC readers quoting 'CS0220'

SNUG IN SHEEPSKIN



As well as its traditional line of classic-style and Royal Air Force-approved flying jackets, Aviation Leathercraft also produces The Monza. Ideal for motoring through the cold winter months, the design features a longer sheepskin and is available in black or brown, with both zip and stud fastening down the front for extra warmth. The Monza is priced at £786 and is available in both men's and women's cuts. Each is handmade at Aviation Leathercraft's Thruxton base, where it forms part of the Moto-Lita company.
01264 772 811; www.flying-jacket.com



E-type tools up

The E-type went out of production in 1971, taking with it the original toolkit that had accompanied each new car since 1961. They're now hard to find, and have been known to change hands for as much as £5000. Jaguar Classic has delved into its archive of technical drawings to recreate the 21-piece set to authentic spec, featuring leatherette-covered canvas roll, branded spanners, a valve-timing gauge, grease gun and more. The kit is priced at £732.
parts.jaguarlandroverclassic.com



Make a Monza

Large-scale construction kits seem to be coming back, and Italeri has released a new 1:18 Alfa Romeo 8C Monza. This is not the old Pocher kit but a new moulding of Tazio Nuvolari's 1932 Monaco Grand Prix winner. It features more than 300 parts, including full engine detail, and costs £157.45 – a fraction of the Pocher. The kit is available from Grand Prix Models.
01295 278070; www.grandprixmodels.com

Good vibrations from Gunson

Gunson Tools has released a new, compact vibratory tumbler for cleaning, de-rusting and deburring small parts. Anything from nuts and bolts to sockets and small tools can be treated – perfect if you would rather save and re-use original fixings. Two types of media are offered: brown resin for removing rust and corrosion, and ceramic for polishing and dry shining. The 7.5in (192mm) tumbler bowl can deal with 7in tools and the 25W motor should be economical (important when polishing can take up to eight hours). Priced at £204.22, it's sure to pay for itself over time.
www.gunson.co.uk





Wheel time

The latest to join Me and My Car's clock range is the Hawthorn, a three-spoke design with stitched real leather 30cm rim. The battery-powered clock is priced at £149. Other car-inspired styles, for either the wall or desk, include the Speedster (£140), Cockpit (£190) and Dashboard (£115).
01865 883061; www.meandmycar.co.ukl

Tested this month

BIGBOI BLOWR PRO

Drying your classic with a conventional chamois or towel can leave scratches. Not so with the BigBoi BlowR Pro. Powered by two 1600W motors, each with two power settings, the BlowR is capable of blasting wet bodywork with a jet of filtered and heated air from 45mph to 179mph. It's a well-built piece of kit that quickly blows water from large panels, evaporating droplets and leaving a residue-free finish. We found it particularly adept at clearing water from cracks and crevices, such as door mirror surrounds and fuel filler caps. High-quality casters and a superb 3.5m commercial-grade hose make moving it around your car a breeze. At £329 it isn't cheap – but nor is a respray, and for touch-free drying the BlowR Pro is unrivalled. **GM**
www.theultimatefinish.co.uk/bigboi.aspx



9/10

MICHELIN DIGITAL TYRE PRESSURE SENSORS

Michelin has released a digital tyre-pressure checker suitable for classics. The £39.95 device replaces your dust caps with pressure-sensing ones that can be checked in the rechargeable keyfob-sized reader, with an accuracy of +/-1.5psi. The caps are a bit chunky, but they will no doubt save a lot of time and hassle. **GM**
www.fit2gotpms.com



7/10

Rolls cards return from the dark



In 1987, Rolls-Royce produced a colourful anniversary set of cigar-style cards celebrating the marque's history. The specially commissioned colour artwork highlighted key models, from 1904 10hp veteran to 1985 Silver Spur Centenary. Now, premier specialist P&A Wood has discovered a stash of sets that make a great framed collection, and is offering them for just £5 plus p&p.
01371 870848; stuart.murray@PA-wood.co.uk

Magnition



Graham Moss at Bentley specialist RC Moss has just created the company's first electric magneto, which replaces the conventional ML/Bosch/ Scintilla/Lucas item in vintage Bentleys. Said to create a spark from almost zero revs, it has only one rotating part, with no contact of any internal components and no unsightly external coils or control boxes. The unit's price is TBC.
www.vintagebentleys.com

Bugattis line up

Fine art printer Richard Wade is a regular at Prescott with his delightful display of hand-printed etchings. The latest, *To the Startline*, features a group of Grand Prix Bugattis. Measuring 200mm x 105mm, this limited edition costs £90. Wade also does special commissions, including an 'autobiography' that features all the cars of your life.
01630 657942; www.richardwade-art.com



MULLIN ESTATE WINES

Peter Mullin is best known for his Art Deco classics, and they have inspired his latest venture: wine from his Umbrian vineyard. Someone had to taste them…

The sole white is the 2018 Grechetto IGT ($27), dedicated to his 1938 'Star of India' Delahaye 135M. It's creamily smooth, with enough acidity to cut through the initial vanilla. There are three reds, starting with the $29 2016 Rosso Umbria IGT tribute to the 1930 Bugatti Type 46 Cabriolet. Light yet spicy and full-flavoured, we thought it was as good as the full-bodied 2016 Syrah Umbria IGT ($53) inspired by the 1937 'Teardrop' Talbot-Lago T150 CS. You'd expect the wine that wears the 1936 Bugatti Type 57SC Atlantic on its label to be the flagship, and the 2016 Sangiovese Umbria IGT (€59) is indeed special: a delicious blend of smokiness and fruit. **AC**



www.mullinestatewines.it



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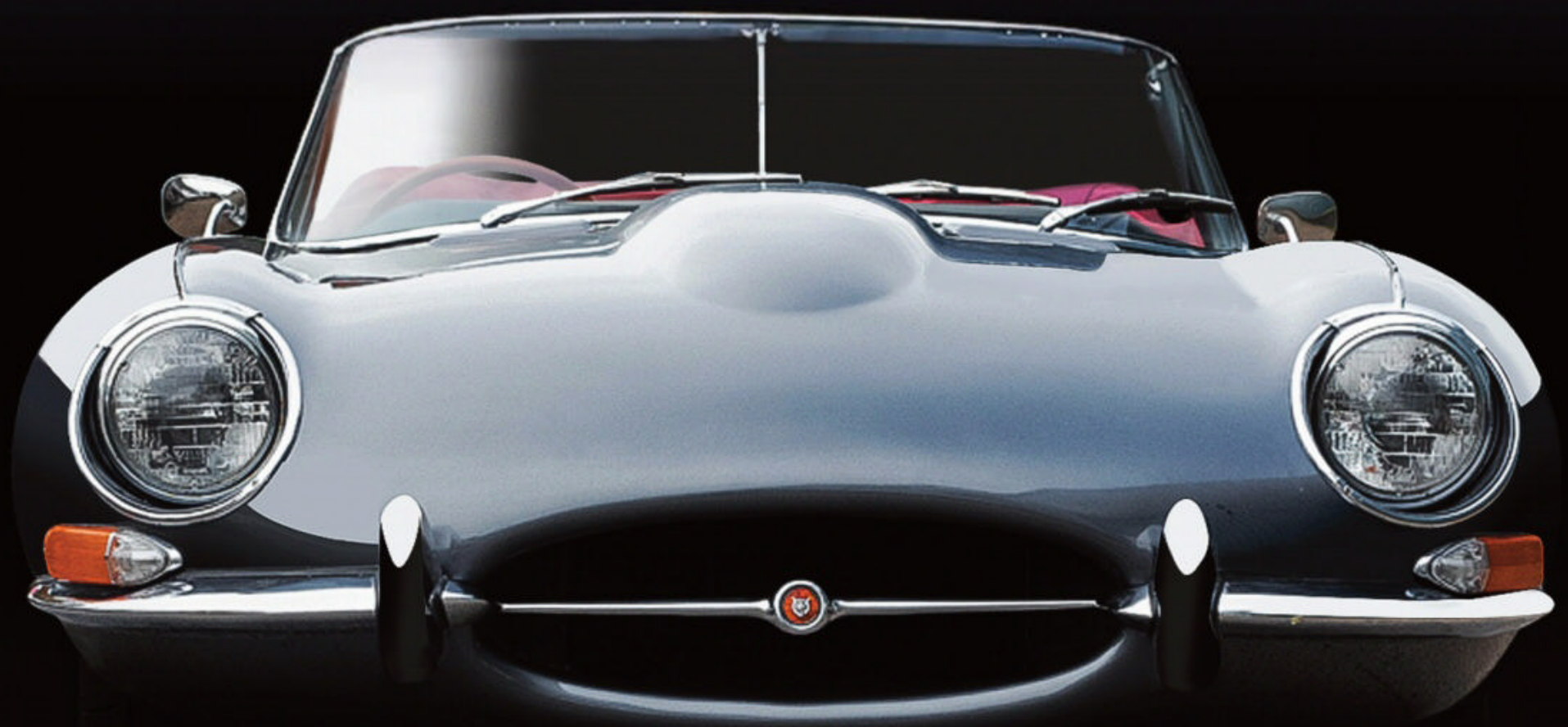
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HISTORICS AUCTIONEERS



Mick WALSH

The movie business has taken over the old Longcross test track, which has hosted sets for everything from *Star Wars* to 007, but none match the surreal spectacle of a trio of Alfa Romeo BAT cars splashing around the rain-soaked course in 1994. My chum Delwyn Mallet's 1937 Studebaker President Coupe was even enlisted as the camera car, with photographer Peter Robain shooting through the spray from the dickey seat. It was like a scene from a '50s sci-fi movie, with the Raymond Loewy-styled Studey streamliner chased by an invasion of UFO-like Bertone-built coupés. The formation of Franco Scaglione's aerodynamic wonders, apprehensive drivers hidden by misted-up glass, was one of this magazine's most amazing feature shots.

After star appearances at motor shows, the fate of these wild handbuilt, Alfa 1900-based creations has always intrigued me. Like so many secondhand Italian exotics in the '50s, the BATs ended up in America, a country where fins ruled and customising is almost a national sport.

Stanley 'Wacky' Arnolt, one of Bertone's key post-war customers, scooped up all three and initially used BAT 5 as everyday transport in LA, clocking up 10,000km before selling it to Joe Przak of South Bend, Indiana. After mechanical problems, '5' was little used until Przak started dismantling it for a restoration that he never completed. The car was eventually discovered by Said Marouf, who has an amazing history of searching out rare Alfas and commissioned Rob Shanahan to complete the rebuild.

BAT 7's later life in America proved more eventful. Repainted red, it was used as a daily driver until the owner decided to take it racing. With spats removed and the nose painted yellow, it braved competition at various tracks and the rear wings were later cut off following an accident. It then appeared in a National petrol promotion, before being found in the '80s by Mexican collector Lorenzo Zambrano, who enlisted Steve Tillack to restore the body back to its original style. With no drawings to work from, Tillack's California team used photographs to recreate the stingray-inspired fins.

The last BAT has the most remarkable story. After ending up as a novelty to draw punters into a dealership in Evart, Michigan, '9' was spotted by young car fanatic Gary Kaberle. Determined to save the "eerie looking" Alfa, the enterprising 16-year-old set up a popcorn stand outside his parents' shop to raise money. Kaberle pestered the owner to sell and, aided by a loan from his grandma, '9' was rescued. Other than a respray in silver, it remained remarkably original.

In 1989 the trio was reunited for the first time at Pebble Beach, where a wealthy Japanese enthusiast was so besotted that he acquired all three and they headed into hiding in Japan.

Early in 1994, a young Simon Kidston – then working at Coys of Kensington – secured the contract to sell the set, and the cars were flown to London. "I'll never forget the day they arrived at Queen's Gate Mews," recalls Kidston. "The truck was nothing special, and when the BATs rolled into the Mews they created a huge buzz, with everyone in the local pub rushing out."

The cars were shown at prestigious events including the Louis Vuitton Concours, to which they were driven down the King's Road. "I was driving '7', sandwiched between '5' and '9' in the convoy," says Kidston. "The view forward and in the mirrors was automotive heaven."

The cars ended up back in California, where they were exhibited for many years in the Blackhawk Collection. Now they are on the market as a set, with a rumoured $30m price-tag. As stylishly as they were presented by auctioneer Phillips in November, visitors were talking more about cars as art than driving. With classics also on show in the V&A, how the world has changed since those memorable moments 25 years ago.

> 'It was like a scene from a '50s sci-fi movie, with the Studebaker chased by an invasion of UFO-style Bertone-built coupés'

From top: superb Phillips display in Berkeley Square made the most of the huge fins; incredible shot of the three BAT Alfas in the rain



TOM SHAXSON/PHILLIPS



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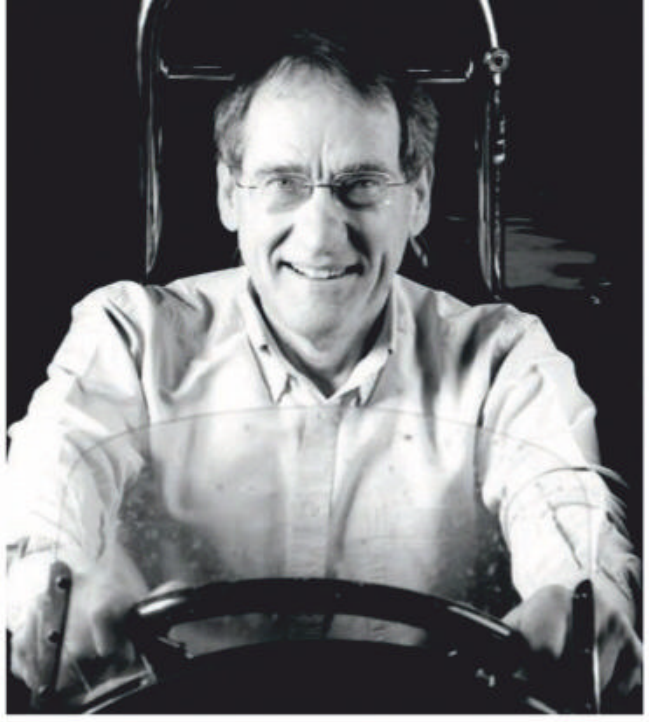
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Simon TAYLOR

France has a glorious tradition of top-line racing drivers. In Formula One, four-time World Champ Alain Prost and Ferrari fighter Jean Alesi spring to mind; so does Henri Pescarolo, who won Le Mans three years on the trot and then a fourth time 10 years later.

From an earlier era, Robert Benoist's wartime bravery ended at the hands of the Nazis; his Resistance colleague Jean-Pierre Wimille survived, but was killed in the 1949 Buenos Aires Grand Prix. Raymond Sommer, the greatest of the three, borrowed a little 1100cc Cooper at Cadours in 1950. He crashed fatally when a wheel bearing seized, sending him into a tree.

The first Frenchman to win a World Championship Grand Prix was Maurice Trintignant, victor in a works Ferrari at Monaco in '55. Following in his F1 footsteps came names such as Jacques Laffite, Jean-Pierre Beltoise, Didier Pironi, René Arnoux, Patrick Tambay, Patrick Depailler… and François Cevert.

Cevert was Central Casting's idea of a racing driver – tall, with piercing blue eyes, dark curly hair and a smile a mile wide, speaking fluent English with a winsome French accent. But there was nothing Hollywood about how he went racing. Not only was he very quick; he was totally focused and determined to get to the top.

He raced motorbikes as a teenager and then switched to cars, winning the Volant Shell, a season-long contest whose prize was an F3 car. By 1968 he was French F3 Champion with a Tecno and moved on to Formula Two.

In those days F2 was also contested by most of the F1 drivers, and reigning World Champion Jackie Stewart found he had to fight hard to catch him at Crystal Palace. Johnny Servoz-Gavin's abrupt retirement had just produced a gap in the Tyrrell F1 team, and on Stewart's strong recommendation Ken Tyrrell brought François into the family.

There was no better way to develop his natural talent than to follow in the World Champion's wheeltracks while under the headmasterly direction of the wisest team boss in F1. By the end of the 1971 season Cevert had won the US GP, and finished third in the World Championship.

He was now accepted as a hard racer, but he remained a cultured man out of the cockpit. He was a talented classical pianist, and if there was a piano in the hotel where the teams were staying he would entertain the somewhat bemused drivers, usually ending with his favourite Beethoven sonata, the *Pathétique*.

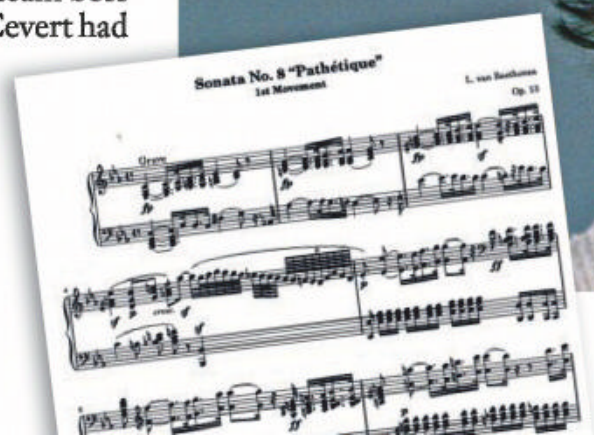
> 'Ken Tyrrell knew he had a polished, experienced performer who was ready to replace Jackie Stewart as his Number One'

From below: Cevert spent his entire F1 career with Tyrrell; always smiling, he was a happy spirit around the pits and paddock





MOTORSPORT IMAGES



In 1973 he played the perfect supporting role to Stewart, with six second places. Jackie, his third world title assured, decided to retire at the end of the season. Ken was confident that in Cevert he had a polished, experienced performer who, after four years with his team, was ready to replace Stewart as his Number One.

But in qualifying for the final round, the United States Grand Prix at Watkins Glen, Cevert was on the limit, going for pole, when the Tyrrell was thrown off-line by a bump. It cartwheeled into and across the steel barriers running beside the track and François died, his body dreadfully mutilated. He was 29 years old.

Stewart was distraught. "He wasn't just my teammate, he was my younger brother," he said. His wife Helen had also been very close to François, who had told her that if anything ever happened to him he would somehow send a message to say he was all right.

Back home in Switzerland the Stewarts went Christmas shopping. Mark, aged five, said he wanted to choose his present for his parents himself. In the record department of a big store Mark trotted up to a long shelf of LPs, and then pulled one out completely at random. It was a recording of Beethoven's Piano Sonata No 8 in C Minor, the *Pathétique*.

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Martin BUCKLEY

This is a rather late review of my visit to the Antwerp Classic Salon, held in March 2019. In fact, I should have gone in 2018, but the trip got snowed off. Given that our travelling companions were Mercedes W123 guru Mark Cosovich and his wife Fiona, we should really have done the 2019 trip to Belgium in a 'Berlin taxi' Benz, but we did the next best thing and took my faithful 124-series 300TD, a car that will soon be unwelcome in every city across the UK with its death-spewing old-technology diesel engine.

To be honest, it doesn't get a much better welcome in Swansea: the W124 is Cosovich's nemesis car, in that to his mind it usurped the solidity of its predecessor with its flimsy trim and lightweight construction. From my point of view, it is possibly the most boringly reliable vehicle in the world – at least it was until my wife forgot to close the sunroof one evening this summer. The predictable deluge that followed in the small hours dampened seats, electrics and general enthusiasm to the point where I doubt the poor thing will ever be the same again. It now mists up like a Turkish bath, blows fuses daily and makes a buzzing under the dash when I press the brake, simultaneously losing all its minor instrument readings. It has, I suppose, turned itself into a '70s Italian car, and the interior now smells like something has died under a seat.

However, in March last year it was still going well and we got to Antwerp and back without incident, apart from a collapsed rear window-winder mechanism that played perfectly into Mark's "W124s are sh*t" narrative.

Antwerp itself looked a bit grey at first, with that bland '70s Euro feel you get from episodes of *The Adventurer* or *The Protectors*, but sadly without the Opel Rekord and Ford Taunus street furniture – although I was pleased to see they still have lots of '70s-style white dog poo.

Further in it is a city of pretty squares and handsome architecture, where they think about art and fashion more than cars. In the spirit of cultural adventure, we hit the bars on the first night and partook of strong continental lagers, then checked out the many tat/vintage shops. After a second night on the Prosecco, one of the wives – I won't say which, but not mine – kept the Union Flag flying by demonstrating that 'legless' is a phrase with real physical meaning.

The show itself was good fun: manageably sized so you don't lose the will to live on the first day; and friendly, with superior food and not too many punters. These included regular *C&SC* contributor Gary Axon – which was no surprise because Gary loves all things odd and French; all the better if they are made out of plastic. I doubt he was disappointed.

'It now mists up like a Turkish bath, blows fuses and buzzes under the dash when I brake: it has turned itself into a '70s Italian car'

Even if you prefer steel-bodied non-French cars the halls served up lots of rarely encountered stuff – when did you last see a Hotchkiss-Grégoire convertible or a BMW 3200 CS? – and there were plenty of autojumble stalls. All I came back with was a French-made biscuit tin with that famous image of Hitler pointing at a model of the Beetle printed on the lid. It's odd to think that this was made as some kind of fancy gift item. I'm not sure why I bought it because I'm not a big fan of Hitler or VWs, but a man has to have somewhere to put his Choco Leibniz.

It looks as if I will be in Antwerp again this year (6-8 March), helping Mark flog the last of our W123 books on a stand with a very special ex-ambassadorial 280TE. Come and say hello, buy a book – or maybe even the car. Somehow I don't think we'll be taking the W124. It's not boring any more, but water damage is the sort of 'interesting' I don't need. In fact, I'm so dispirited with the thing that I'll probably give it to my daughter, Caitlin, who virtually grew up in these cars. Hopefully, by the time she's sorted insurance (which could be tricky) it will be dried out, working properly and not too smelly.

Buckley's highlights from his March trip to Antwerp's Classic Salon included BMW 3200 CS (below) and rare Hotchkiss-Grégoire convertible (bottom)





GARY AXON

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Letter of the month

Make-do-and-mend on the streets of the Middle East

I was interested to read Lee Smith's letter in the September edition of *C&SC* concerning the Fiat 131 Mirafiori Estate.

Living on the Golan, one notices a number of vehicle model types still being widely used that are perhaps not seen in the numbers that they once were in the UK or Europe. One of the more noteworthy models is the venerable Fiat 131, which is an often-seen vehicle of choice for some residents of Damascus.

Interestingly, so are Peugeot 504s and 405s; there's also a number of extremely worn Land-Rover Series IIs and Series IIIs. While there are, of course, far more numerous modern cars on the roads, these vehicles from my youth stand out!

Clearly, the present security situation causes Syrian vehicle owners some difficulties, so their maintenance of these older models is testament to their cars' enduring capabilities and, in numerous cases I'm sure, the tenacity of the local mechanics.

As an aside, a wander across Damascus does bring about many interesting automotive sights. An Opel Speedster (the local equivalent of the Vauxhall VX220) lives in the car park of one of the large shopping malls; there are some (albeit very few) 1950s, '60s and '70s US cars, plus various modern and not-so-modern Range Rovers and Range Rover Sports – including an SVR – and even a Bentley Continental GTC visiting from Dubai. And, of course, Toyota Land Cruisers, the mainstay of the UN – including my own vehicle, an armoured Land Cruiser.

Most cars here look like entries for a banger race. The local driving needs to be seen to be believed; it's like Cairo or Beirut, and certainly not London or even Petworth, my home town in Sussex.

Major Andrew Banks
Camp Faouar, Syrian Arab Republic







Syrian street spots (clockwise): Peugeot 504; Fiat 131; Jaguar MkVII

Write to alastair.clements@haymarket.com. *Letter of the month* wins a personalised Carvolution sketch; see **www.carvolutioncompany.com**





PETER VAUGHAN

Cute Fiat Fiesta campervan is on Ingerson's dream list

A family of Fiats

That darned Martin Buckley! Yet again he has managed to get his hands on a car that I have been looking for/lusting after for many years. In relatively recent times, his acquisitions or experiences have included a Fiat 130 Coupé (I've managed to snare one of those), an Oldsmobile Toronado (one of the few American cars I would own), an NSU Ro80 (unfortunately very rare here in Australia), and now a Fiat 850 camper (*Backfire*, October), which is a vehicle I have been hunting for decades.

I once aimed to get a full set of Fiat 850s – sedan, Coupé, Spider and van. My daughter learned to drive in an 850 Special sedan, and my son in a Series 3 850 Sport. Thus far, the van has eluded me. Among the dozens of classic cars I have owned in 50 years of messing about with them, the 850 Spider has taken us farther than any of the others.

I am quite happy to see that Mr Buckley changes his cars on a seemingly regular basis – it means he is more than likely to come up with something else on my lust list. So keep up the good work, sir!

Roger Ingerson
Macclesfield, South Australia

Causing a stink

Reading *Lost & found* in the August issue reminded me that my friend retired from BT not long ago, and told me of a jolly jape played with the old GPO Moggy vans.

They all had the same key, allowing employees to take whichever van was allocated. The prank began with disconnecting the battery, wiring up a small stinkbomb in the interior light, closing the door, then reconnecting the battery. When the hapless colleague opened the door, triggering the interior light, this sent an incendiary current through the smelly assembly and 'Poooof!' – the interior was filled with the miasma of sulphur.



Andy Ibbotson's GPO van revived memories

Folk became wise to this, checking the light assembly before attempting to gain entry and quickly learning to identify the signs. They would then simply enter the van through the rear doors, without lighting the interior bulb, and dismantle the booby trap.

As with all automobile design, sophistication then increased by the simple technique of setting up the stinkbomb as before and pushing the van back against a wall. This added a further level of joy, because the van driver would see the stinkbomb, but the only method of entry would be through the front door. This ingenuity is what made our country great.

Tim Cherrett
Via email

Pedant of the month

Pedant of the month wins a *C&SC* baseball cap. Send your observations to **alastair.clements@haymarket.com**



I noticed a couple of errors in two otherwise enjoyable articles in the November issue. The story on Bond Astons states: 'While the first film in the series, *Dr No*, was a huge success, the second instalment caused a furore.' That is true, but the second film was *From Russia with Love*, not *Goldfinger* as the story implies.

Where *Dr No* was a low-profile, low-budget action movie, *From Russia with Love* had extensive publicity, a big budget, gadgets, a theme song and self-conscious humour. As such, it set a pattern for every Bond film that followed.

The article comparing Aston DB MkIII and AC Aceca states: 'Fleming took delivery of chassis RS5506 in August 1967.' That is incorrect: Fleming died in 1964.
Paul Falon

Comments & clarifications

The 'London Calling' story (*C&SC*, December) was indeed a capital idea, but Mason's Yard is off Duke Street, St James's, not King Street, and the area is St James's not St James.
David Long

Paul Hardiman was wrong when he said that the Etype S3 4.2 he drove in the January 2018 *C&SC* is the only LHD example. Four were built, chassis EX101-EX104, all LHD in Willow Green. They were kept in the UK, unless this one was repainted and exported. I've seen two over the years, and one is in Winchester.
Tony Brown

C&SC would like to thank Ian Mellor for the superb shot of Simon Taylor's HWM-Chevrolet in December's *Our classics* – and apologies for the missing credit!



Jon Huffer's rare Citroën Visa Chrono at speed on the Grouse road rally

KRYTEN PHOTOGRAPHY

Visa pays off

Great to see the snippet about the Citroën Visa Chrono (*C&SC*, October): the model wasn't sold in the UK, so accordingly doesn't get much coverage. The Visa GT was marketed here, but in an era when attention was focused on hot hatches from Ford and VW.

France has a long history of sporting *voiturettes*, and the Visa is part of this story. M Chatonnet is spot-on: the Chrono was born for rallying, and a check on the internet shows plenty of 1980s action.

Today, when cars are brilliant if a little anodyne, my daily driver is a VW up! GTI, whose overly stiff suspension and low-profile tyres can spoil the experience on broken road surfaces. The Chrono revels in this kind of motoring. Mine is car 832 from the first run of 1000, and it's brilliant on back-roads: not too large, with sufficient suspension travel and ground clearance to clatter over the bumps and cattle grids without me wincing.

The empty roads of East Lothian and the Borders are on my doorstep and the Visa's 1360cc and 95hp allow extended use of the right foot, while the close-ratio 'box gives enough excitement for the 'older teenager'. Even in my relatively hopeless hands it feels very special.
Jon Huffer
Via email

Two-stroke stories

I was delighted to read 'Running rings around the Cotswolds' (*C&SC*, November). It reminded me of a few very happy years of Auto Union/DKW ownership. My interest in the marque was sparked by seeing the DKWs racing at Silverstone in the 1950s. When I found myself posted to Germany in 1959, I decided to buy a DKW and found a good secondhand 3=6 Sonderklasse, here pictured with a Mercedes 170V – the windtone horns were fitted for me by REME!



Davies' Deek 3=6 (top) and his Auto Union

Having owned this car for about nine months, I was visiting the local dealer, Autohaus Fritz Klussmeyer in Lemke, when I saw an attractive Auto Union 1000S coupé in green with a cream roof. I casually asked Herr Klussmeyer how much he would give me for my DKW in part-exchange, and he generously offered me approximately what I had paid for it (£250). A deal was done and I acquired my first new car for about £800, against the UK price at the time of £1259 2s 6d.

Fellow officers were very rude about my little car making such a noise – it was known as my 'phut phut'. But at 70-80mph on the *autobahn* their tune soon changed!

I had the car for several years in England and on one occasion, having stopped for lunch while travelling with a friend from Chard to Nuneaton, the clutch cable broke. Here the freewheel device came into its own, because my friend was able to push-start the car then jump in while it was moving, and we continued the journey with clutchless gearchanges. Luckily, I was able to acquire a Volkswagen clutch cable and modify it for a temporary repair to get me home.

Having owned the car for seven years, I was posted to Brecon and decided it was time to acquire a car that could be serviced in the depths of Wales. I part-exchanged the Auto Union for an Austin 1100, which was a disaster.

The last I saw of my wonderful 1000S was at the Yeovil Festival of Transport in 1982, when it was in the autojumble and a shadow of its former self. I wonder if any reader knows what happened to it?
Lt Col Michael Davies (retd)
Chard, Somerset

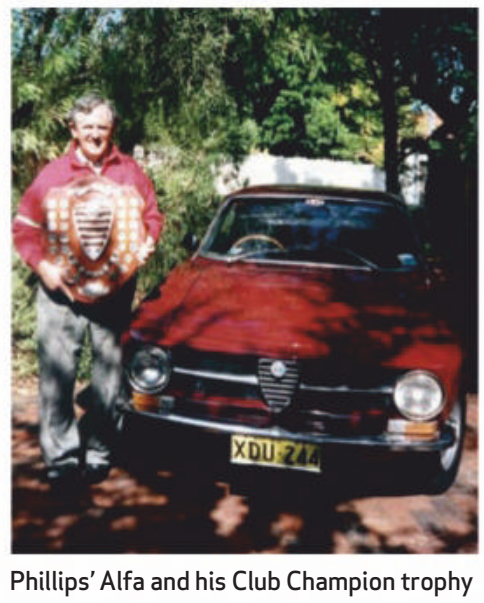
Faithful friend

In the interests of rust-busting the myths about Alfas, I applaud my old Aussie friend Andrew Stevens' letter in your July edition. I have been an Alfa owner for nigh-on 40 years, and retain the first one I ever bought, a 1600 GT Junior from 1973. Now that it has more than 270,000km under its belt, I feel I can comment on longevity.

Of the 30-plus Italian cars I have owned in the past 50 years, this car has served us with minimal attention. Some rust in the bottoms of both doors needed welding, as did the front quarter panels. But the sills are still sound enough and elsewhere the bodywork seems to be holding up, with just the odd corrosion spot in the floors.

A '95 repaint brightened things, and stainless-steel bumpers and trims retain their lustre. The front seats were re-upholstered 10 years ago. The original engine is now undergoing a rebuild, while a spare 1750 keeps me mobile. Despite our current fleet of various Lancias, Fiats and Alfas, the Junior is still a favourite to drive – though my wife prefers her 2001 156 Twin Spark.

I always had British cars until the Junior came along. No names, but some rusted like mad. Bravo Andrew for defending a great car. I lift my hat to him, and to Alfa Romeo.
Dr Glen Phillips
Perth, Western Australia



Phillips' Alfa and his Club Champion trophy



O'Shea with delivery of Magnette bodies

An inspector calls

Further to Alastair Clements' report on his MG Magnette ZB in *Our classics* (September), I thought you might like this photo of my late father-in-law, John O'Shea.

John worked at the MG plant in Abingdon from the TF days until he retired in 1978. He was an inspector, latterly on the final line, and here he is accepting a load of what look like ZB bodies.

Bernard Harris
Via email

Scam concerns

I was surprised to receive a letter recently from the DVLA, letting me know that it had received an application to register a new keeper for one of my garaged MGs. If I did not respond within 14 days, the DVLA would issue a new V5C to the person who had applied.

My first question was what if I had been on holiday and would therefore be unable to respond? The letter looked convincing, but anyone can create these to a new scam phone number.

Shocked, I decided to go to our local police station with ownership evidence. They rang the DVLA and the letter turned out to be genuine; they also raised the issue about holidays and the potential weakness of the system. The DVLA did not name the applicant, but clearly the intent is enough of a crime and should be acted upon.

This needs to change in some way, so that receiving permission from the registered keeper is required, with no time limit, to prevent this loophole.

Anon
Via email

Pedal power

I enjoyed reading 'Mettle to the Pedal' in the September issue of *Classic & Sports Car* about the Austin J40 pedal cars. I visited the Bargoed factory towards its final years in my work as an insurance surveyor, during which it was necessary for me to see all areas of the site. In the stores, sitting on top of the racking, was the final J40 pedal car, painted in white and looking somewhat forlorn.

To complete your mention of the various 'registration numbers', this particular car wore 'LAST 1'. I wonder where it is now?

Alan Fullalove
Pinar de Campoverde, Spain

'LAST 1' survives and is in the British Motor Museum at Gaydon, after David Hook, the last works manager at Bargoed, donated it to the BMIHT. This car was not the last production J40, but the final one made up using a leftover shell and spare parts, and was kept at the works.

When I saw LAST 1, it was in the medical room under matron's couch!

David Whyley
Author, Austin Pedal Cars



The final Austin J40, LAST 1, pictured in front of the Bargoed factory's main doors in 1971

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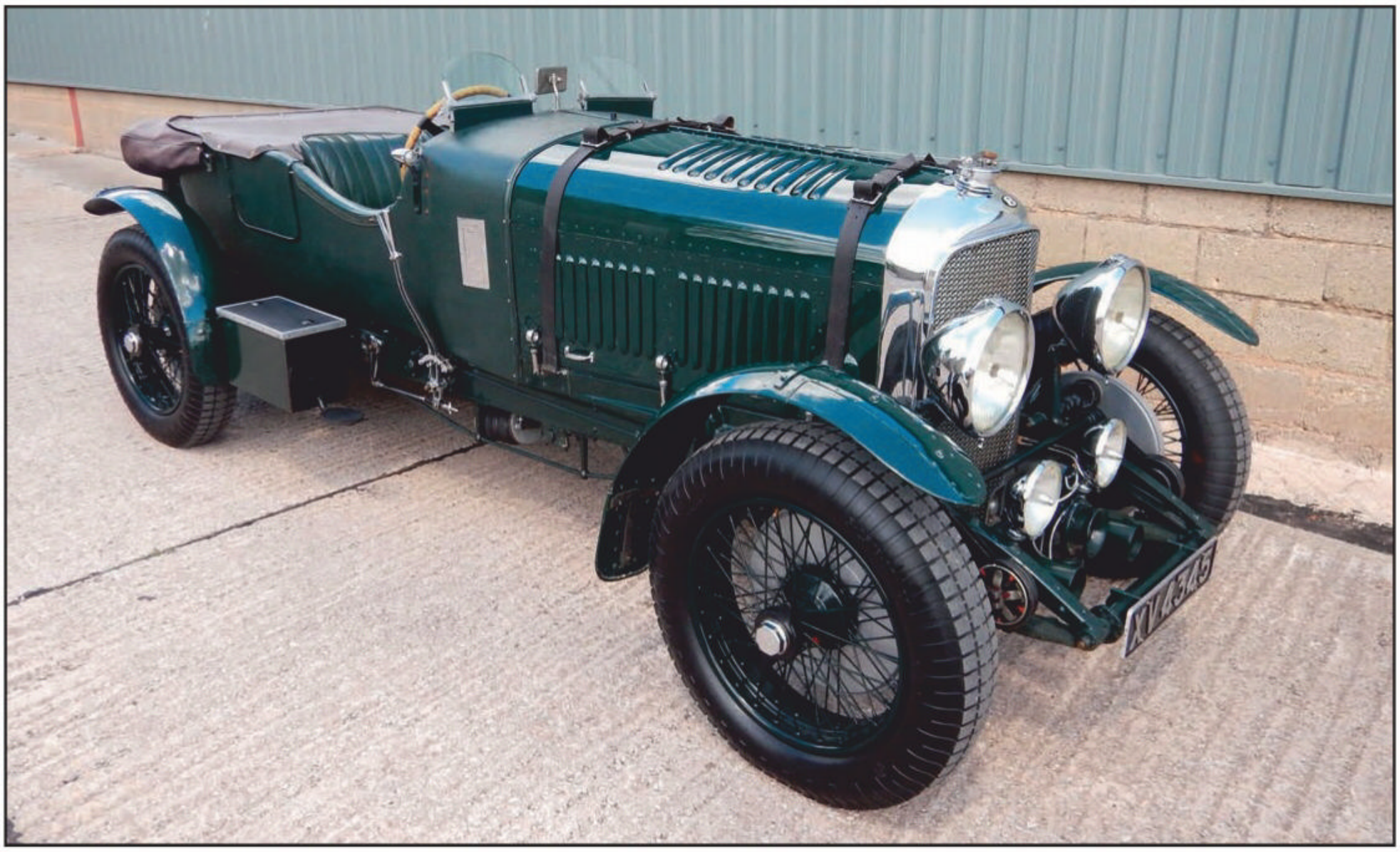


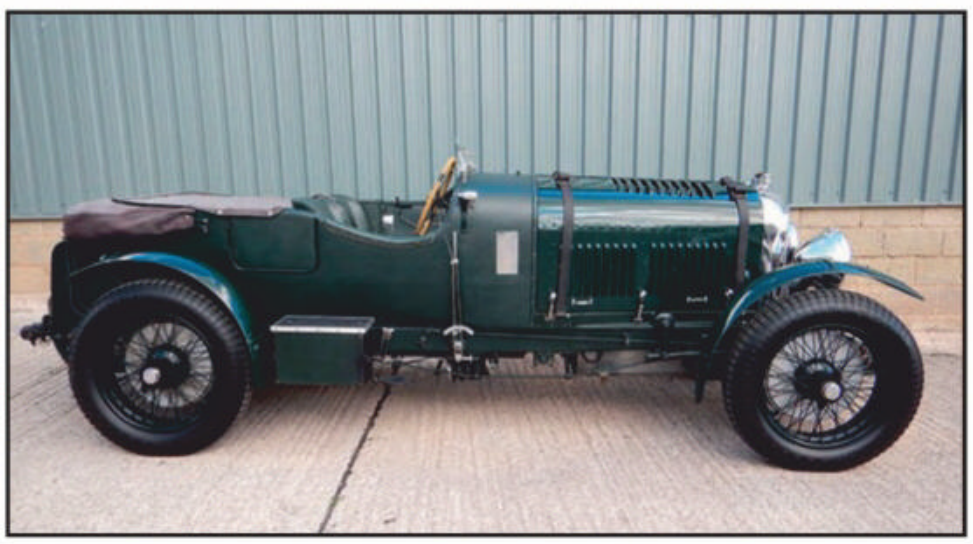
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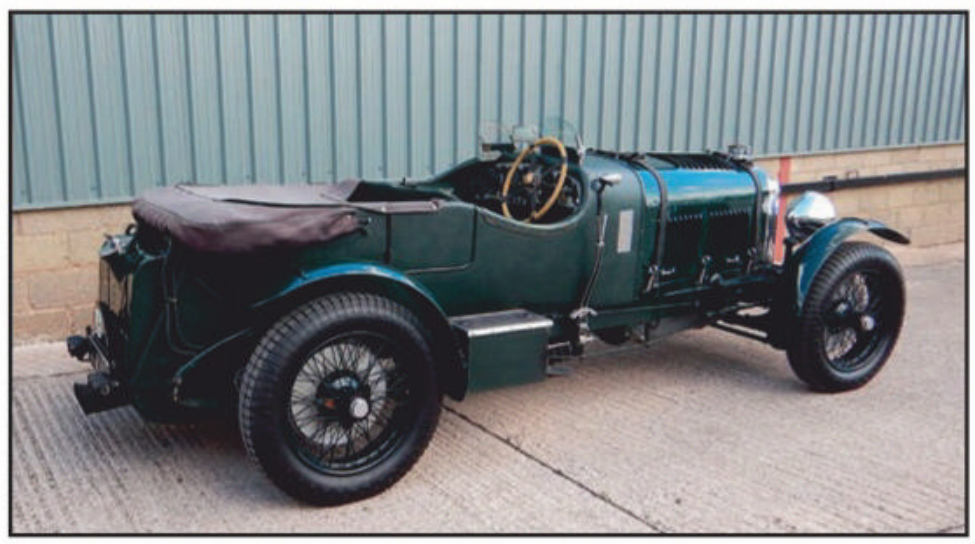
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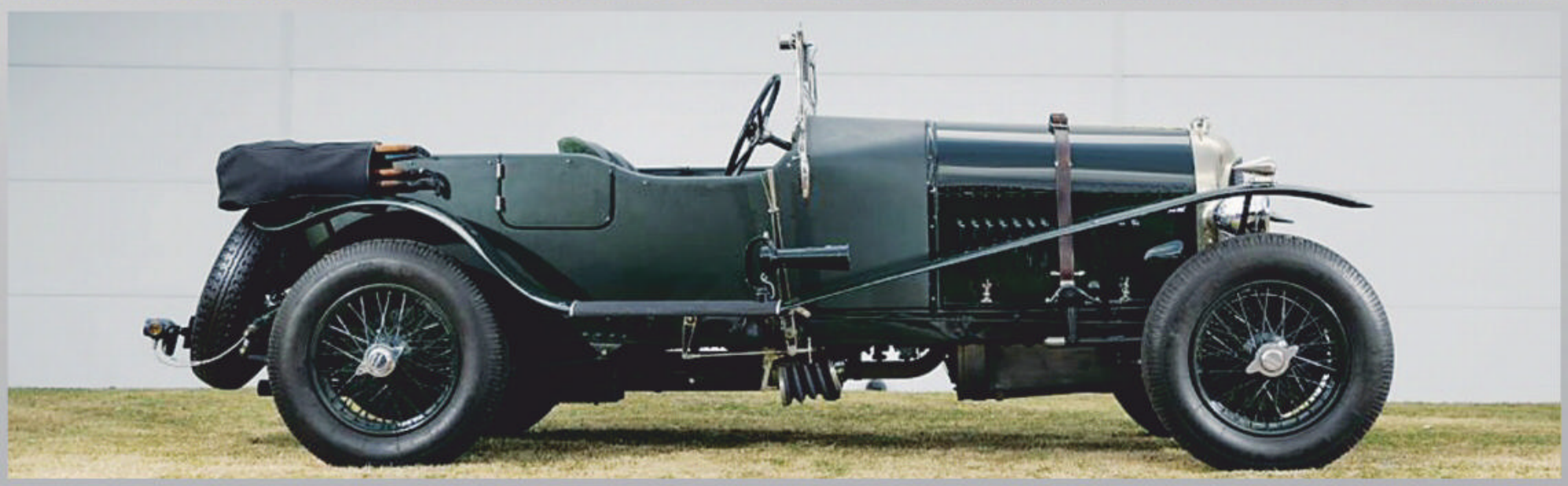
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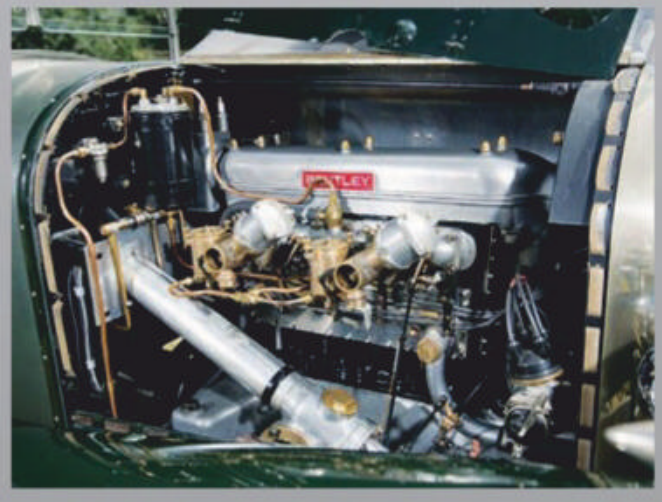
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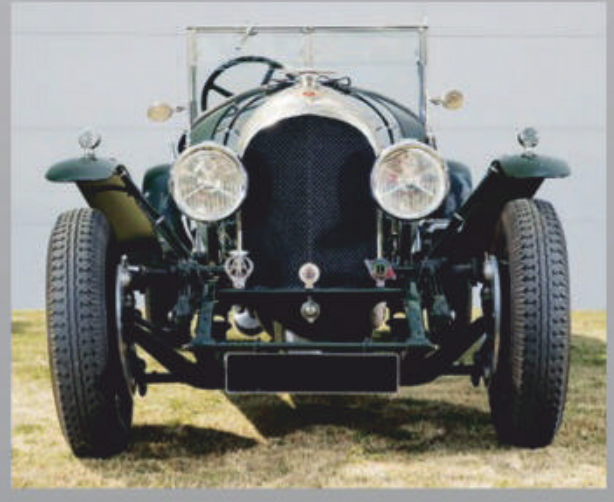
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Ferrari 275 GTB/4 (LHD)

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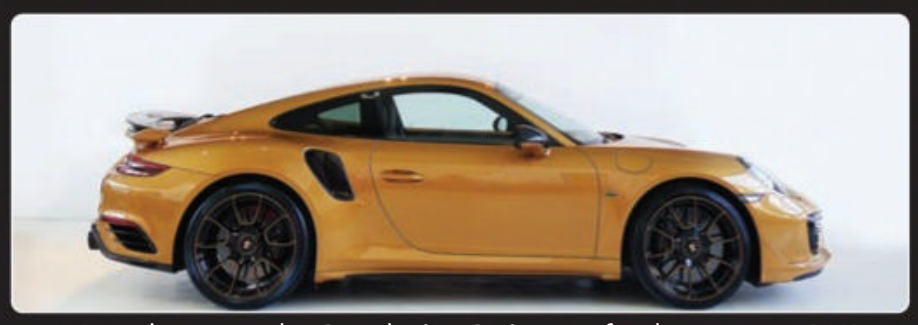

1974 Citroën DS 23 Pallas - fully restored, one owner car, manual


1972 Ferrari 365 GTC/4 - bare metal restoration, Rosso Cordoba with Tan


1967 Jaguar Mk 2 240 - restored, upgraded to 4.2 litre, Navy over Grey

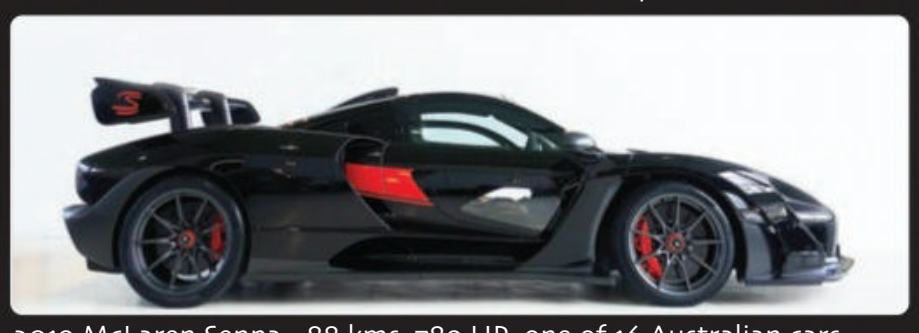

1966 Aston Martin DB6 Mk1 Vantage - match. numbers, fully restored

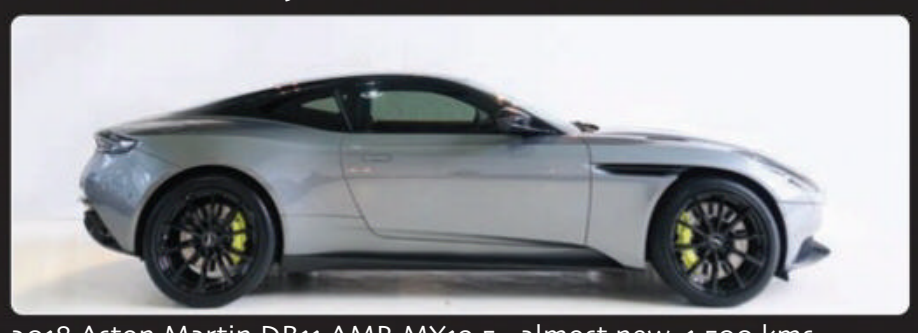

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1963 Ferrari 250 GTE 2+2 £299,950

The history of the 250 GTE 2+2 is arguably one of the richest in Ferrari's extensive history. This car was designed specifically to appeal to the sector of the car market which was largely dominated by brands such as Aston Martin & Maserati throughout the late 50's and early 60's. The 250 GTE saw its debut at the 1960 Le Mans 24-Hour race where it served, in prototype form, as the race director's car and saw it's official unveiling at the Paris Salon later that same year.

Of course there had been four seater Ferraris before the 250 GTE, the Ghia, Touring and Vignale all boasted four seats as early as the 50's; however the fact that they were based on a chassis that wasn't conceived with passenger carrying in mind meant that they were somewhat compromised.

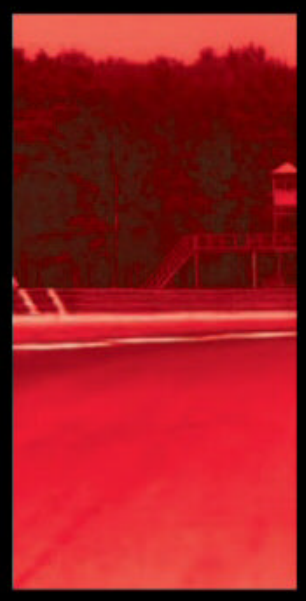
The car makes use of independent front suspension, a live rear axle and a four speed manual/overdrive gearbox to complete the basic chassis specification. These were coupled with a compact Colombo designed Tipo 128E V12 engine producing 240bhp to ensure that the larger car did not suffer from any undue decreases in performance.

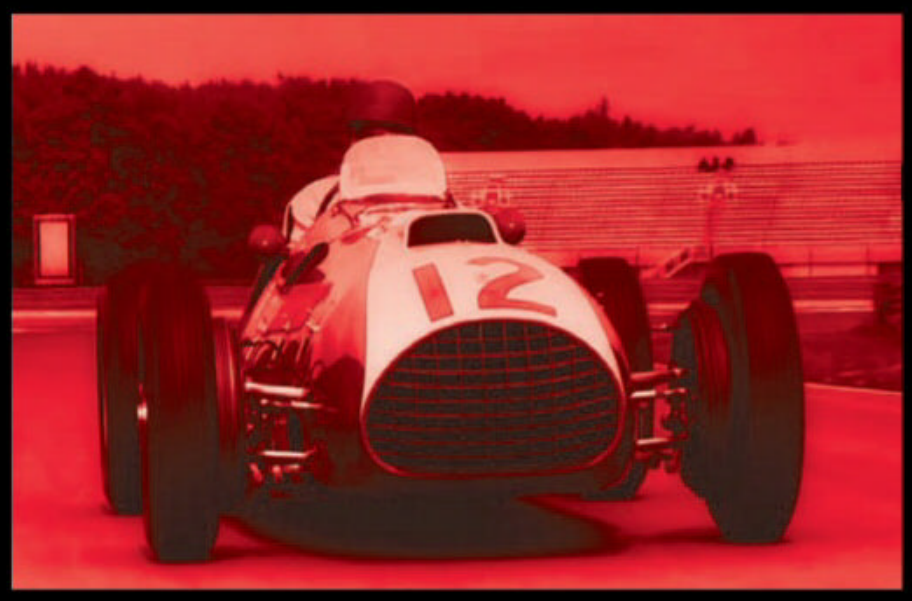
The car we are pleased to offer was delivered new in 1963 and has since been totally restored and sits today in the stunning colour scheme of Dark Blue over Tan Leather. The car is a matching numbers example and retains superb historical documents, including the original license of the car, original maintenance book, and the November 2018 issue of "Epocauto" magazine, containing an article on the car. This 250 GTE would make a brilliant addition to any Ferrari collection and presents itself as a genuine investment opportunity being one of the last truly undervalued 250 series Ferraris! Contact us now to find out more about this wonderful car.

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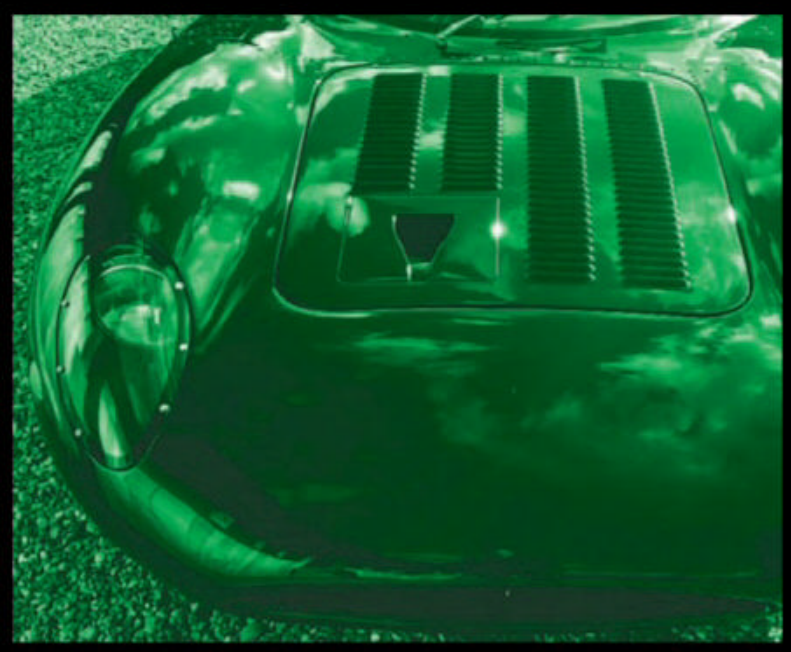










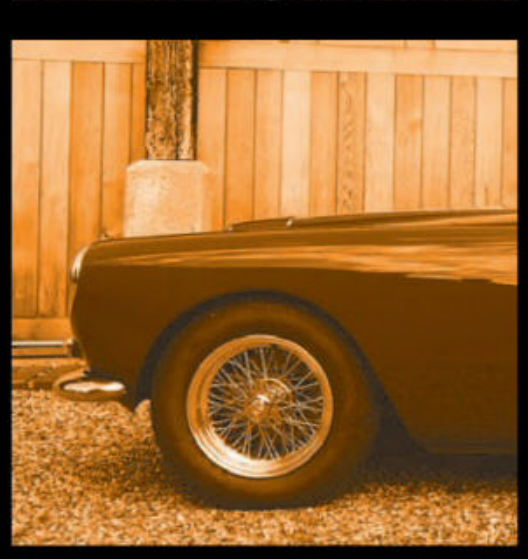


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Ferrari 330 GTC
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Ferrari 365 GTB/4 Daytona
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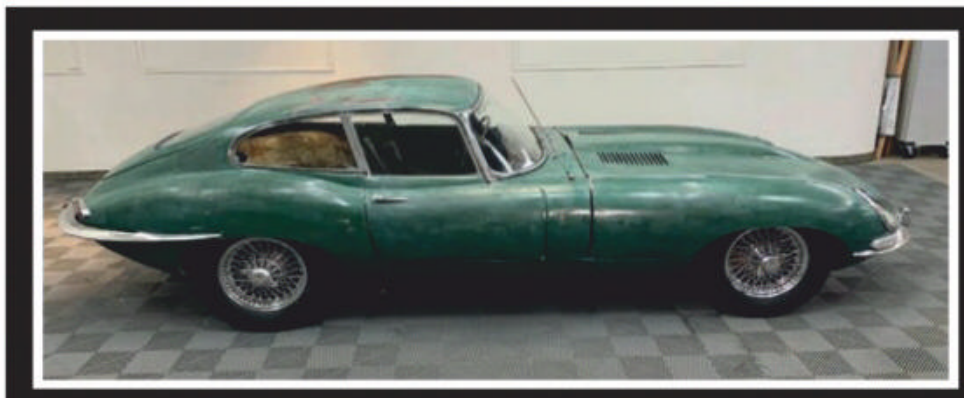
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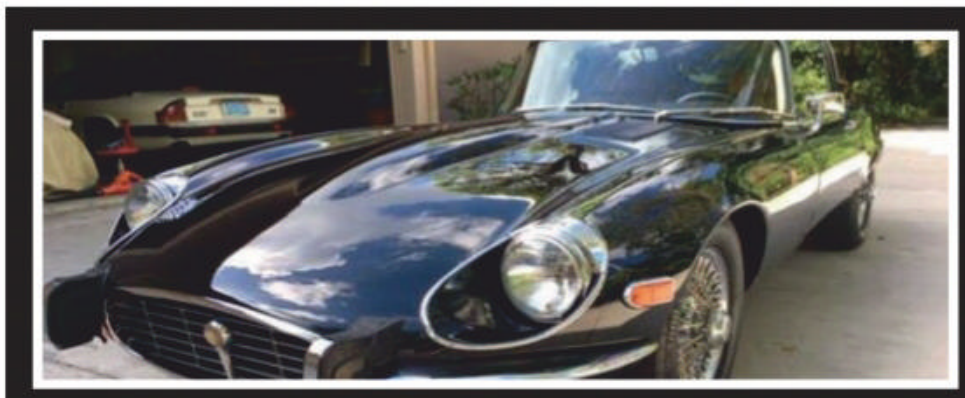
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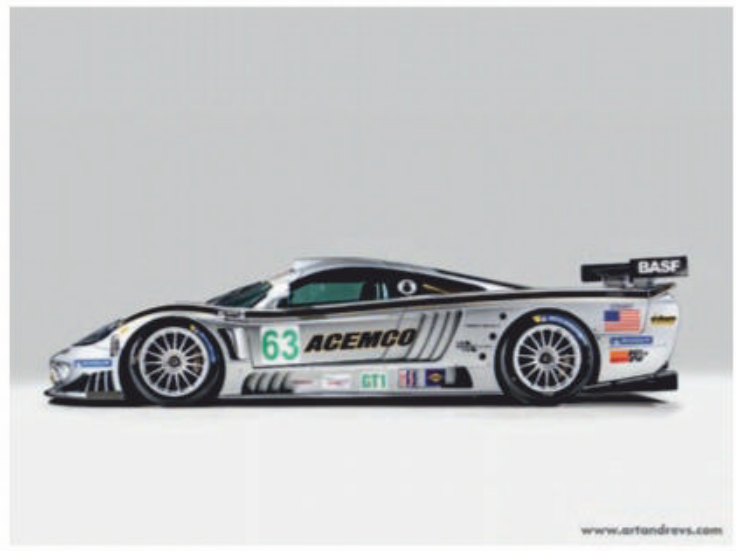
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Born for the rally stage, the Audi quattro and Lancia Delta Integrale led a new genre of performance car whose outrageous pace could be enjoyed whatever the weather

WORDS **CHRIS CHILTON** PHOTOGRAPHY **OLGUN KORDAL**


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It's not always being first that makes the difference, but being the first one to *really* make a difference. Technically, Audi's quattro (with a small 'q' when applied to the car, rather than the transmission) wasn't the first fast four-wheel-drive coupé, a fact that's unlikely to dim the celebrations of its 40th anniversary this year. The Jensen FF, an all-paw evolution of the V8 Interceptor, got there almost 15 years earlier, but sold in tiny numbers and was killed off in 1971. A decade later, though, it was Audi doing the exterminating, using a similar concept to destroy the two-wheel-drive competition in rallying, changing the face of the sport – and the sports car – for ever.

But if it was Audi that got the four-wheel-drive rally car ball rolling, leveraging the technology from its Iltis off-roader to create an epoch-defining loose-surface weapon at the behest of Porsche 917 creator Ferdinand Piëch, it was Lancia and the Delta that picked it up and ran with it. The Italians notched up six World Rally Championship manufacturer titles to Audi's two, and three drivers' championships to Audi's two, in the 1980s and early '90s.

Though definitely cut from similar cloth, quattro and Delta never really crossed swords on the rally stage (see p100). Despite continuous evolution that gave us the short-wheelbase Sport quattro and culminated in the shovel-nose E1, the quattro's star was fading towards the end of the Group B era. The Audi had been conceived under the old Group 4 rules and was struggling to cope with bespoke Group B supercars such as the Peugeot 205 T16 and Lancia Delta S4, mid-engined machines that shared little more than a name with their road-car cousins.

Sadly, Group B was banned for the 1987 season, partly in response to Henri Toivonen's

'It's a surprise to find that the Delta's steering doesn't have the same sensitivity as the quattro's, but that does give it a solid, planted feel'



The compact Lancia looks far taller than the more elegant Audi, but its wheel-at-each-corner stance gives the little Delta real aggression

Darron Edwards
QUATTRO 10V

"It's the sight and sound for me," says engineer and confirmed quattro nut Darron Edwards. "I remember watching them rallying on ITV's *World of Sport* and instantly wanted one. I wouldn't care if it did 0-60mph in 12 secs, I'd still want one."

In fact, he has four: an early left-hand-drive car that's about to undergo a major restoration, a black WR, an early Group 4 Rally replica, and this white car. A two-previous-owner WR, it's all original and has just 64,000 miles on its digital clocks.

"It used to be tricky to get parts," says Edwards, who bought his first quattro in 1992, and now spends much of his time repairing them for other enthusiasts. "Before the internet really took off you were at the mercy of rip-off specialists charging fortunes for parts. Now you can source spares from all over the world."

Steven Jeffery-Bradley
DELTA INTEGRALE

"I always had a thing for 1980s turbo cars," says Steven Jeffery-Bradley, as he tries to explain why a man who services and repairs Mercedes cars for a living is so smitten by a bright-red Italian rally weapon. "I've had Escort and Fiesta RS Turbos, an Uno Turbo, a Renault 5 GT Turbo, and I'd had my eye on this Delta Integrale for a while."

The owner had no intention of selling, but when he passed away in 2015 Jeffery-Bradley stepped in rather than see the rare 8v fall into unsympathetic hands.

Not that it was pristine as bought. "You name it, we've had it fixed," says Jeffery-Bradley. "A top-end engine rebuild, plus brakes, suspension, a rear-axle rebuild and a full respray. I wasn't even sure how much I'd like it when I bought it because I couldn't drive it. But I'd never sell it now. I don't think my son would forgive me, anyway."



tragic death in a Delta S4 on the '86 Tour de Corse. But when the rally world regrouped for '87 under the new Group A rules, it was Lancia again that was making headlines, this time for all the right reasons and with a car that, in common with those early quattro rally machines, was incredibly close to the regular production car that you could buy from your local dealer.

Three decades on, the roadgoing quattro and Integrale push the same emotional buttons and cost similar money. They're similarly quick and their permanent four-wheel-drive transmissions give them the ability to tackle any weather conditions. But which makes the best four-wheel-drive, four-season daily classic? We've brought two relatively early examples of each together to the Brecon Beacons in Wales, not far from the old RAC Rally route, to find out.

In the red corner is Steven Jeffery-Bradley's eight-valve Lancia HF Delta Integrale. In the white corner, Darron Edwards' 10-valve quattro. Both look suitably tough, with their boxy wheelarches stretched to house bigger wheels on the competition cars. But it's the Delta that nails the stance, its 15in wheels stuffed tight into each corner, leaving no wasteful overhang. The Audi looks a little over-long and under-wheeled in comparison, its proportions hinting at the mechanical layout it inherited from the 1978 80 saloon, which marries a north-south engine and front-wheel drive. What you can't see is just how far forward beyond the axle line the five-cylinder engine lies, or the clever centre differential bolted to the back of the gearbox featuring two shafts, one turning within the other to deliver drive to all four wheels without the need for a bulky transfer box.

We'll take the birthday boy first. The 'Ur' (German for original) quattros divide into three eras, known as WR, MB and RR. WR cars carried the 2144cc 10-valve in-line 'five', which was superseded by the 2226cc MB for 1988, still making the same 197bhp but fitted with hydraulic valve lifters and more sophisticated fuel injection for cleaner running. In 1989, the final, most desirable RR version arrived, its four-valve head helping lift power to 217bhp.

Edwards' car is a WR, but by the time it was built in 1986, quattros had swapped the early quad headlights in favour of a pair of modern,

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Warbling five-pot motor (below right) is slung out surprisingly far ahead of the front-axle line

AUDI QUATTRO 10V

Sold/number built 1980-'91/11,452 (all)
Construction steel monocoque
Engine iron-block, alloy-head, sohc 2144cc 10v 'five', Bosch K-Jetronic fuel injection and KKK turbocharger with intercooler
Max power 197bhp @ 5500rpm
Max torque 210lb ft @ 3500rpm
Transmission five-speed manual with integral centre differential, AWD
Suspension MacPherson struts, anti-roll bars (front only from 1982)
Steering power-assisted rack and pinion
Brakes 11in (280mm) ventilated front, 9½in (244mm) solid rear discs, with servo
Length 14ft 5¼in (4404mm)
Width 5ft 7¾in (1780mm)
Height 4ft 5in (1346mm)
Wheelbase 8ft 3¼in (2524mm)
Weight 2844lb (1290kg)
0-60mph 6.5 secs
Top speed 138mph **Mpg** 19.9
Price new £24,204 (1986)
Price now £25-50,000

flush-fitting rectangular lamps. The skinny 6x15in Ronal wheels (or optional 7x15in Fuchs) were also binned in favour of an 8in-wide set that are a happier fit in the arches, but cause all kinds of unhappiness when it's time to shop for new rubber thanks to their unusual 215-section tyres.

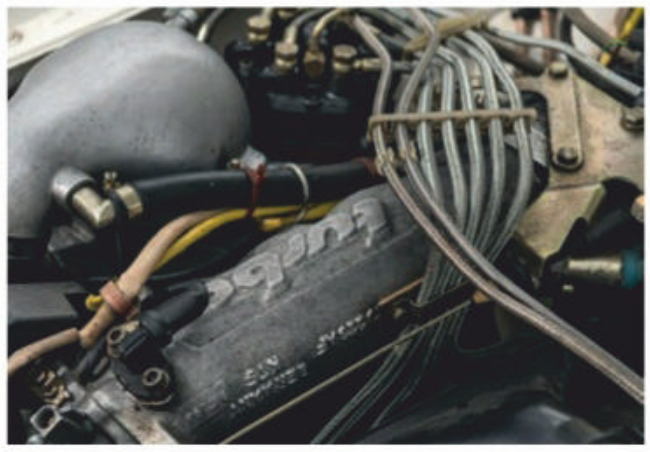
But the most important change for British buyers came in late 1982, a year after the UK introduction, when Audi began offering the quattro in right-hand drive.

There's no doubt the familiarity that comes with sitting on the right of the car helps you hit it off with the quattro from the start. Other aspects, also familiar, are less endearing: some of the switchgear feels better suited to a Yugo than a car costing almost as much as a 911 Carrera when new (not that some Porsche dash bits from this era were anything to write home about).

You sit low, the long bonnet unfolding ahead beyond a surprisingly raked bit of glass. All cars built after '83 got a digital instrument binnacle; green at first, then orange on later cars. It must have seemed trick at the time, but it's not nice to look at even if you don't mind these things: a contemporary Vauxhall Astra GTE's digital instrument pack is easier to read at a lick.

But the quattro, even this early 10v car, is so much faster than a humble hot hatch. Trickle along with the engine off-boost and the famously warbly five-cylinder soundtrack is strangely muted. Dip into the throttle pedal's arc and the initial response is impressively sharp, though there's little in the way of actual energy until the turbo wakes up, whereupon you're hurled forward to the accompaniment of an induction and exhaust that suddenly find their voice.

With the turbo blowing the WR surges up hills in one long lunge, dispatches dawdling cars without even considering a downchange in the







Cabin feels sober and will be familiar to owners of any '80s VW Group car, though the funky digital dash (above) adds a splash of colour



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Both cars offer a boxy beauty, enhanced by muscular wheelarches. Delta's four-banger (below) is 15bhp shy of the Audi's potent 'five'

LANCIA DELTA HF INTEGRALE 8V

Sold/number built 1987-'89/9841 (8v only)
Construction steel monocoque
Engine iron-block, alloy-head, dohc 1995cc 8v 'four', Weber fuel injection and Garrett T3 turbocharger with intercooler
Max power 182bhp @ 5300rpm
Max torque 224lb ft @ 3500rpm
Transmission five-speed manual with integral centre differential, AWD
Suspension MacPherson struts, anti-roll bars
Steering power-assisted rack and pinion
Brakes 11¼in (284mm) ventilated front, 9in (227mm) solid rear discs, with servo
Length 12ft 9½in (3900mm) **Width** 5ft 7in (1700mm) **Height** 4ft 6¼in (1380mm)
Wheelbase 8ft 1½in (2480mm)
Weight 2793lb (1267kg)
0-60mph 6.4 secs
Top speed 130mph **Mpg** 17.6
Price new £25,862 (1988)
Price now £20-45,000

five-speed manual 'box. Period tests put the quattro's 0-60mph acceleration at 6.5 secs, meaning it's still usefully rapid by modern standards, if around a second slower than the later RR. But it's the way the quattro steers that catches you off guard, not the way it goes.

If the knowledge that there's so much weight slung out beyond the front wheels suggests the Audi is going to feel stodgy or inert, the tiniest nudge of the thin-rimmed, leather-wrapped wheel entirely disabuses you of the notion. The steering is disarmingly light just off the straight-ahead, giving it a delicate, almost nervous feel until you learn to relax your grip, listen a little harder for the messages coming back through the rim and trust them despite the lack of reassuring weight as you tip it into a bend.

You need to learn to trust the brakes, too. Road testers in the 1980s and '90s were forever complaining about over-servoed Audi brakes, but, if anything, these could do with a bit more bite. Really get into them and there seems to be plenty of retardation, but the softness underfoot doesn't inspire confidence in the same way the incredible traction does. Climb on the gas too early on the way through a tight corner and you can feel the 50:50 torque split and the big old lump of engine over the nose trying to push you wide. But the effect is much less pronounced than you fear, and the remedy simple: lift your right foot, wait a beat, then get back on it. There are no vices, and even without the automatic Torsen centre differential that transformed the handling when it arrived with the MB engine in 1988, this is still a hugely fun car to hurl down a B-road in Wales – or indeed anywhere else.

By the decade's end the quattro was still on sale, along with various Quattros (four-wheel-drive versions of Audi's ordinary cars, this time with a capital Q). But Audi's narrow-arched







Ergonomics aren't the Lancia's strong suit, but the striped cloth looks great and it is a practical package. Above right: tiny dials are tricky to read



Juhas Kankkunen and Piironen scrabble their way to victory on the 1991 Australian Rally

FROM RALLY STAGE FIGHT TO ROAD CAR RIVALS

A common misconception is that these two were the poster boys of Group B that pushed one another to the edge and beyond, when going over it came with deadly consequences. But the quattro faced off with a Lancia hatch only when its star was falling, and the Italian's was rising.

The quattro was, in truth, the car that killed the little Britons. With power to all four wheels rather than merely the back two of the Escort and Sunbeam Lotus, they were crushed into irrelevance. Flying Finn Hannu Mikkola opened the road-car-based quattro's account in 1981 in only its second event, in Sweden, before adding the RAC Rally at the season's end – six weeks after Michèle Mouton's Rallye Sanremo victory.

Stig Blomqvist joined for three fruitful events in 1982, winning in Sweden and Italy and finishing runner-up behind Mikkola in Finland. Mouton, like Mikkola, claimed three wins to hand Audi the coveted World Rally Championship for Manufacturers ahead of Opel and Walter Röhrl.

But the spectre of Group B was looming and the Group 4 quattro gave way in 1983 to the revised A1 and the mid-season A2 revamp. They combined to take Mikkola finally to the drivers' title, but Lancia's 037 secured the teams' pot and suggested a turn of the tide. Yet Audi added a double champion to its ranks in Röhrl, and steamrollered the championship. Blomqvist came out on top in a year that featured three podium lockouts. The 037 would win just once.

All-wheel drive came to Italy for '85 in the shape of the S4 – a Delta in silhouette alone – which announced itself with a debut win on the RAC, matching the S1 quattro's tally at a stroke.

Its chief exponent could extract the best and worst out the the mid-engined monster S4: Henri Toivonen started 1986 at Monte-Carlo where he'd left '85, on the top step, but in May he perished in a shocking accident on the Tour de Corse. The cars were never seen again after the season-ending Olympus Rally in America, won by Markku Alén in an S4 – its fourth win of the season, and fifth and final ever. The aged quattro featured just twice in the top three and was despatched to Pikes Peak in retirement.

Group B outlawed, WRC looked back to the road for inspiration and Group A was promoted to top billing. No fewer than 46 victories were secured in just six years by Lancia's Deltas, and six constructors' championships – its leanest year was with the 16v Integrale in 1990, when it won just six of the 12 events…

Its roll call matched even the quattro's: Miki Biasion (15 wins), Juha Kankkunen (nine), Didier Auriol (eight), Alén (six). Lancia departed at the end of '92, its rivalry with Audi a future construct like that of Senna and Schumacher. A 'what if'. **JP**



The spectacular Hannu Mikkola and Arne Hertz *en route* to fourth on the 1981 Rallye Sanremo

MOTORSPORT IMAGES



These icons of '80s excess feel perfectly at home – and hard to separate – on the sinuous roads of the Brecon Beacons

Group A Coupé Quattros were no match for the Lancia Deltas. The balance of power had shifted.

Not for the first time. Rewind to 1983 and you might remember that Lancia's mid-engined 037 managed to split the quattro's two WRC titles in a heroic last gasp for two-wheel drive. Markku Alén was also briefly drivers' champion in 1986 after Toivonen was killed, before FISA promoted Juha Kankkunen to the top spot on a technicality 11 days later. From '87 it was Lancia all the way.

That first manufacturers' win in Group A's first year as flagship was actually accomplished in a narrow-arched Delta HF; the 8v Integrale didn't appear until early in the 1988 season, eight years after the cooking Delta had bagged the European Car of the Year crown.

Building on the spec of the four-wheel-drive 2-litre Delta HF, the 8v Integrale received a bigger Garrett turbo and intercooler, boosting power from 165 to 182bhp. Wheels and tyres grew in width and diameter to 15x6in, nestled under arches that were clearly designed for even more serious hardware, and a centre diff split the torque 56:44 in favour of the front wheels.

The 16v Integrale that followed in 1989 reversed that split, and the bonnet bulge



required to clear its 200bhp four-valve head added an extra dose of visual aggression that was ramped up even further in the Evolution I and II that followed. But you approach this meeker early 8v car with no less enthusiasm.

With advice from owner Jeffery-Bradley not to spare the horses because the car can definitely handle it – and a warning not to wind the window down more than halfway, because it definitely can’t – the keys are snatched from his grasp and thrust into the steering lock.

Like almost all Integrales, this Italian-market car is left-hand drive, though the differences between it and the Audi aren’t limited to the side the wheel is mounted. The driving position is more upright; the windscreen, too. It almost feels like a bigger Innocenti Mini De Tomaso, and you drive it in exactly the same way. “Now maximum attack,” as Alén used to say.

The abrupt clutch and light gearshift make strange bedfellows and the ergonomics are typically chaotic. There’s a comprehensive eight-dial analogue dashboard, but the Momo wheel rim manages to completely ruin the view of the important bits of both speedo and rev counter.

Fortunately, you can feel and hear enough that you can live without both. Twin balancer shafts add refinement to the in-line ‘four’, but it’s never what you’d call musical. The throttle response feels softer than the Audi’s, and it’s a surprise to discover the Delta’s steering doesn’t have that same sensitivity in the first few degrees on either side of the straight-ahead.

But that gives it a solid, planted feel. There’s a pleasing meatiness to the steering, a connection to the front tyres that encourages you to lean on them even in the very early moments of getting to know the car. Roll your wrists into a bend and it’s the Delta that better resists body roll. Push hard into a tight corner and it’s the Delta that’s less inclined to push wide. Climbing back on to the throttle on the way out? They feel evenly matched, contemporary figures suggesting that the Lancia pipped the Audi to 60mph by a solitary tenth. The Integrale’s mid-range pull is monstrous, stronger even than the Audi’s, the only disappointment being that it doesn’t quite sustain the lunge into the last section of the rev counter; you need 16 valves for that. Stomp on the brakes, though, and there are no let-downs. The middle pedal feels beautifully firm, the hallmark of a car that lives to be beasted.

If you really were looking for an everyday classic, you’d be both cruel and spectacularly brave to pick the Delta over the quattro. Both could take the vagaries of the British climate, and the Delta’s rear doors and practical hatch mean it’s genuinely family-friendly. Until it breaks and your family defriends you. The Lancia’s thin tin and iffy electrics wouldn’t thank you for it, and while you quickly acclimatise to life on the left, it’s still not as straightforward as sitting on the UK-correct side.

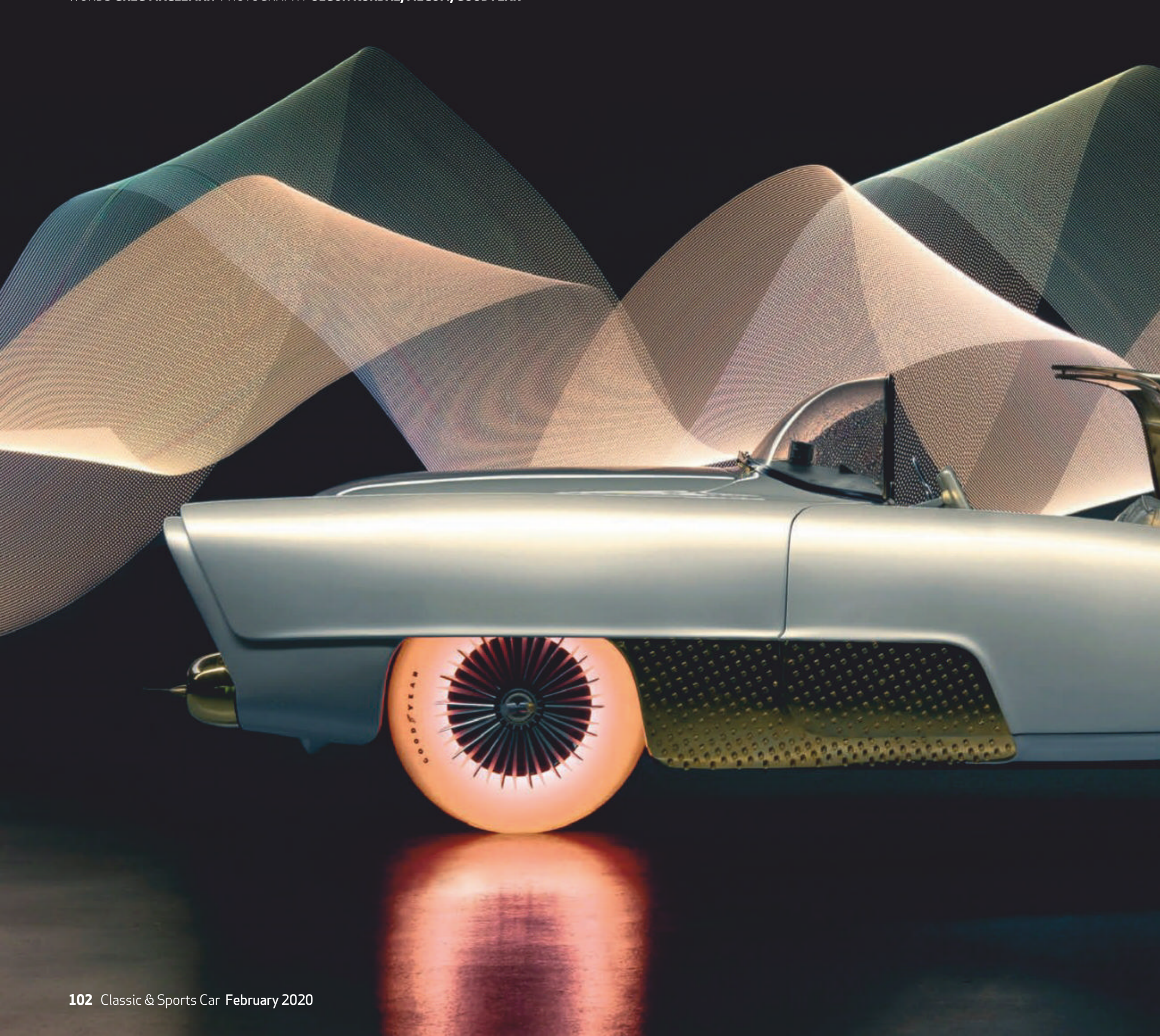
No, ideally you’d want both: a late, galvanised quattro for hacking about through the week and a Delta for weekend use. And as recently as a decade ago you could have afforded to do that. Not any longer. The low-mileage Audi that Edwards paid £6500 for is now insured for £40k, and the leggier Lancia is worth around £25,000. Let’s face it, for all their all-weather capabilities, these are special-occasion cars. And one feels slightly more special than the other. Head says Audi; ears, too. But I’d go for the Delta, and brace myself for the inevitable blues.

Thanks to *Lancia Motor Club (lanciamc.co.uk); Quattro Owners’ Club (quattroownersclub.com)*

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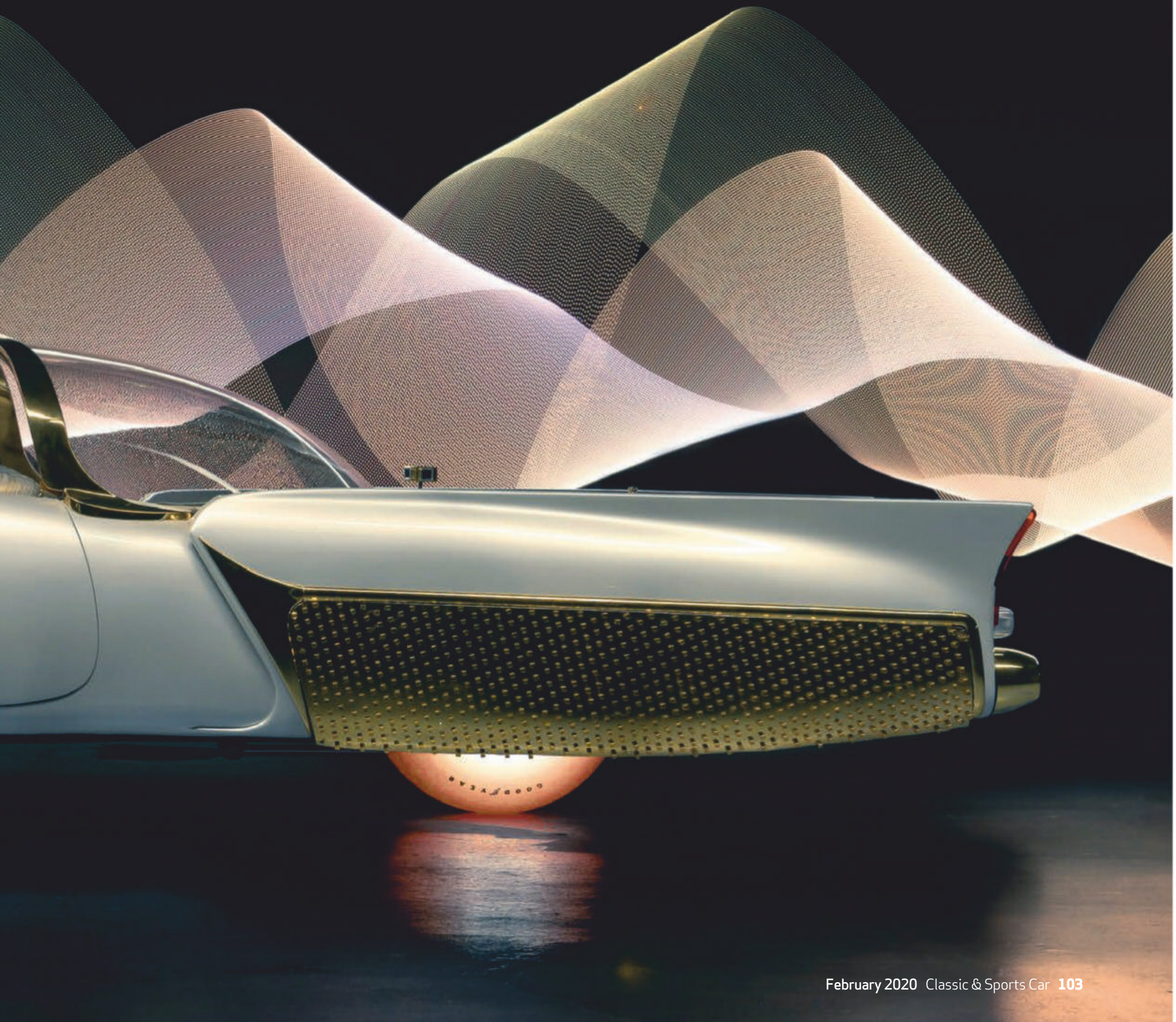
Recently unearthed after its disappearance in the '60s, the opulent Golden Sahara II

WORDS **GREG MACLEMAN** PHOTOGRAPHY **OLGUN KORDAL/MECUM/GOODYEAR**



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Stars that go out at the top of their trajectory always shine brightest in the memory. Jackie Stewart won more, but it's Jim Clark that first springs to mind when pub chat turns to the greatest drivers of all time. And while there have been beautiful screen sirens since, few can match the effervescence and charisma of Marilyn Monroe. The Golden Sahara II occupies a similar place in the minds of custom-car enthusiasts; a glittering combination of electrical wizardry and jaw-dropping decadence, with a future cut short when the limelight burned fiercest.

Just like Norma Jeane, the Sahara came from humble beginnings. The year was 1953, and barrelling south through the California countryside was legendary customiser George Barris, travelling home to Los Angeles in convoy with his friend Dan Landon from a car show in Sacramento. Midway through their journey a thick fog rolled in, blanketing the highway in a scene that could have come straight from a Hitchcock movie. As if on the director's cue, Landon's 1949 Chevy sputtered and stalled before coasting to the side of the road. The pair lashed the car to the rear bumper of Barris' 1953 Lincoln Capri before again striking south.

Conditions worsened, and from the gloom a hay truck suddenly lurched into their path. The Lincoln slewed beneath its trailer, smashing the driver's-side roof and opening the coupe like a tin of beans. Both men ducked beneath the dash, but Barris caught the worst of it and had to walk to a nearby bar, where a doctor (also worse for wear, by all accounts) treated the cuts to his face.

Where mere mortals would have seen disaster, the 'King of Kustomizers' saw opportunity. His low-mileage, lightly modified daily driver's bodywork was destroyed, but the chassis and running gear were sound. Instead of scrapping the Lincoln, Barris and friends Bill DeCarr and Jim Skonzakes – better known as Jim Street – hatched a plan to turn it into their vision of the future. The work would be carried out at Barris' shop in Lynwood, California, with DeCarr taking lead on spanners and finances coming from Ohio-based enthusiast Street. The trio quickly embarked upon a series of wild modifications, creating something more akin to a high-end concept than a traditional custom.

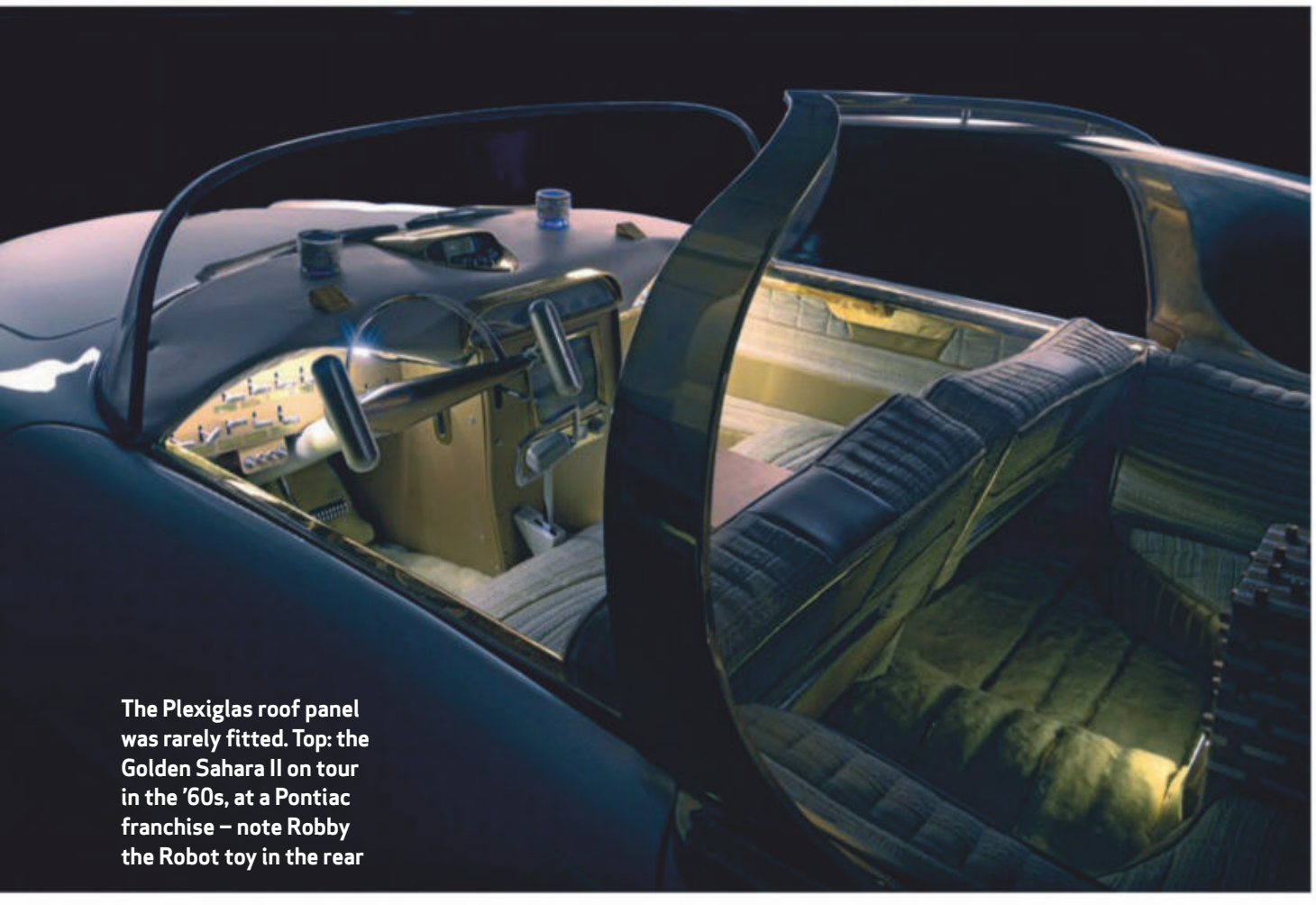
After months in his workshop, the finished car bore almost no resemblance to the ill-fated Capri, with towering front wings looming over the headlamps, bullet-style protrusions at each end in place of the bumpers and a wide, fish-like mouth. The cabin was covered by a T-top Plexiglas roof with partial gullwing sections for driver and passenger, while the long rear wings ended in flamboyant fins topped with futuristic tail-lamps from a Kaiser Manhattan.

Inside, white leatherette and gold brocade adorned the seats, with a decadent curved rear bench split by a central cocktail cabinet and fridge, and white mink carpets across the floor. The lower sections of the rear wings were finished in 24-carat gold, giving rise to its name, while the elements that would conventionally be chrome were plated to match. The combined effect was like nothing on Earth and the car caused a sensation when it was unveiled in 1954 at the Petersen Motorama in Los Angeles, where the Golden Sahara took pride of place on Barris' stand atop a revolving turntable.

The project was said to have cost more than $25,000 – enough to buy three Jaguar XKSSs, with change to take them racing – and, in order to recoup some of the money that he had spent, Street embarked on an epic tour of the USA, showcasing the car at dealerships and drawing a crowd wherever it went. In May 1955 it even graced the cover of *Motor Trend*.

Buoyed by its reception on the show circuit, Street decided to invest further in the Golden Sahara and, with the help of Delphos Machine and Tool in Dayton, Ohio, set about turning the car into an even crazier version of itself. Lashings of gold was added to each flank and the Plexiglas T-top was reworked to a more elegant open dome design with a vee-shaped roll bar, while outlandish twin-fin wings were added to the rear, capped by unique lenses cooked up in pal Henry Meyer's oven. The paint finish was breathtaking. The luscious, shimmering pearl was said to be achieved by grinding up fish scales from the underbelly of sardines – "the true, genuine pearlescence", according to Street.

But some of the car's most innovative ideas stemmed from Street's passion for electronics.



The Plexiglas roof panel was rarely fitted. Top: the Golden Sahara II on tour in the '60s, at a Pontiac franchise – note Robby the Robot toy in the rear

Street's first wife Gloria, a former Miss Florida, wore gold body paint to pose with the car. Below: 'GS' initials emblazoned across the headlamps

'The combined effect was like nothing on Earth and the car caused a sensation when it was unveiled at the Petersen Motorama'

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‘Just as it seemed as if the Golden Sahara II was at the very height of its fame, the car abruptly disappeared from public view’

The Golden Sahara was already advanced, with a black-and-white TV set into the dashboard at a time when having one in your front room was still a luxury, but the car’s second incarnation was truly remarkable. The conventional steering wheel was replaced by a Batmobile-style yoke, complemented by touchpad steering that could be operated from either side of the car. Most fascinating of all was a central joystick – dubbed the ‘Unitrol’ – that was connected to a steering box mounted in the frame and stuck straight up through the floor. Moving the control from side to side turned the wheels, while fore and aft motions were linked to the throttle and brakes. When it was not in use, the system could be disconnected so it didn’t get in the way.

Street’s sponsorship drive had led to the car fronting Seiberling’s ‘Tires of Tomorrow – Today’ campaign in its original guise, and it was a later tie-in with Goodyear that gave the Golden Sahara II its most striking feature: translucent tyres that could be illuminated from the inside. Originally designed with safety in mind, the use of urethane was pioneered by Goodyear in the 1960s under the brand name Neothane, with a full set adorning Street’s creation for its second spell on the show circuit. Having no banding whatsoever, the ‘Gold Glass Slippers’ were created using a device that resembled a front-loading washing machine. A mould was filled with molten synthetic rubber before being spun and tilted from side to side, depending on the required thickness of tread and sidewalls. The tyres were lit from within using 12W bulbs more commonly found in aircraft and elevators, the hubs capped with crystal that flashed in time with the indicators.

Such was the car’s star status that it soon appeared on film in the 1960 Frank Tashlin flick *Cinderfella*, serving as the futuristic carriage for lead man Jerry Lewis. Dashing from the ball before the clock strikes midnight, Lewis skips down a flight of red-carpeted stairs, only for the Golden Sahara II’s door to swing open automatically before he climbs in. Norman Leavitt played the gold-skinned chauffeur for the close-ups, while Street himself is said to have operated the car when it was on the move.



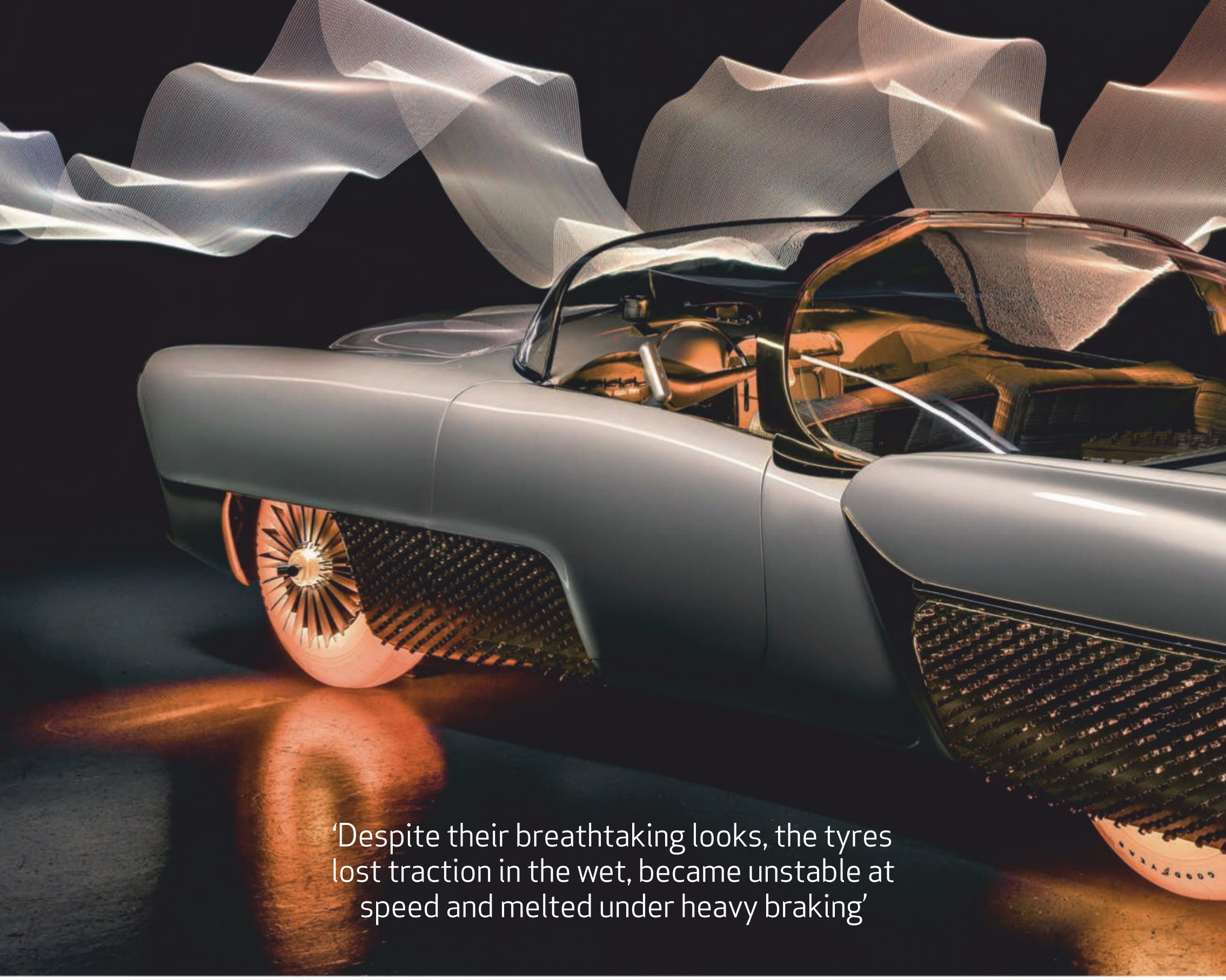
Neothane tyres were created using a centrifugal mould

At around the same time, and perhaps in a nod to the car’s cameo on the silver screen, Street demonstrated the Golden Sahara II with the help of his wife Gloria, who accentuated the car’s curves with one or two of her own. The former Miss Florida draped herself over the bodywork while painted head to foot in gold. When Gloria wasn’t available, the task was left to an army of Robby the Robot toys, positioned as if they had just arrived from outer space and spun the Sahara from the ‘angel hair’ Street arranged around the car. Fittingly, Robby the Robot, star of the 1956 film *Forbidden Planet*, was one of the most expensive movie props ever made at a reported cost of $125,000.

By that stage the Sahara owed Street $75k and its star continued to rise, making a memorable appearance on the panel show *I’ve Got a Secret* in 1962, where Street showcased some of the abilities of his ‘laboratory on wheels’ in front of a live studio audience. As if by magic, the car drove on stage via remote control, and there were demonstrations of starting its engine at the push of a button, the massage seats and the automated braking system. Then, just as it seemed as if the Golden Sahara II was at the height of its fame, the car abruptly disappeared from public view without warning.

Throughout the 1960s and ’70s, rumours swirled as to the Sahara II’s whereabouts, with many believing that it had been destroyed or dismantled by its owner. As the decades rolled on it became almost mythical, claiming a similar place in the memories of custom fans as the lost *Bullitt* Mustang had to the wider car community. Like the Mustang the Golden Sahara II would eventually resurface, following Street’s death in 2017. The car had remained in his possession all along, a closely guarded secret in his Ohio garage alongside Norm Grabowski’s legendary Kookie Kar. The Sahara first saw the light of day in the estate sale, offered at auction to great fanfare by Mecum in May 2018 before being snapped up by collector Larry Klairmont.

A half century of inactivity had not done the car any favours: though solid, it had suffered cosmetically. The once pearlescent white paint had discoloured with age, becoming yellow and stained, while the gold leaf had tarnished and



‘Despite their breathtaking looks, the tyres lost traction in the wet, became unstable at speed and melted under heavy braking’

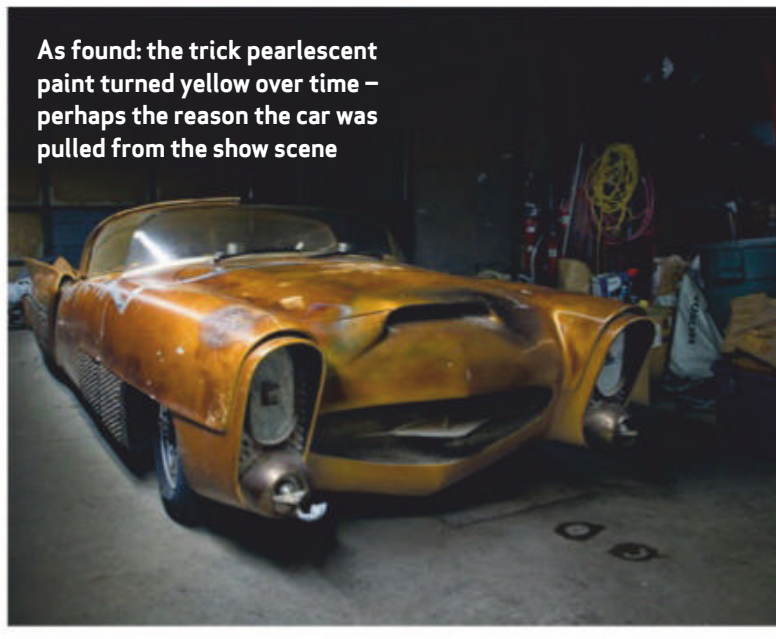
flaked; the urethane tyres are said to have disintegrated almost instantly. “We discussed preservation, but there was a 95% consensus on restoration,” says Klairmont Kollection’s Robert Olsen, who led the renovation effort. “Pieces of the paint were missing; if we had preserved it, the car wouldn’t have looked as special.”

By chance, regular Klairmont Kollection visitor Gregory Alonzo owns a small shop in Chicago called Speakeasy Customs & Classics, and expressed an interest in carrying out the repairs. He won the work after arranging a meeting with Keith Buckley at Goodyear in nearby Akron, Ohio, having recognised that recreating the Sahara II’s trademark illuminated tyres would be crucial to the project.

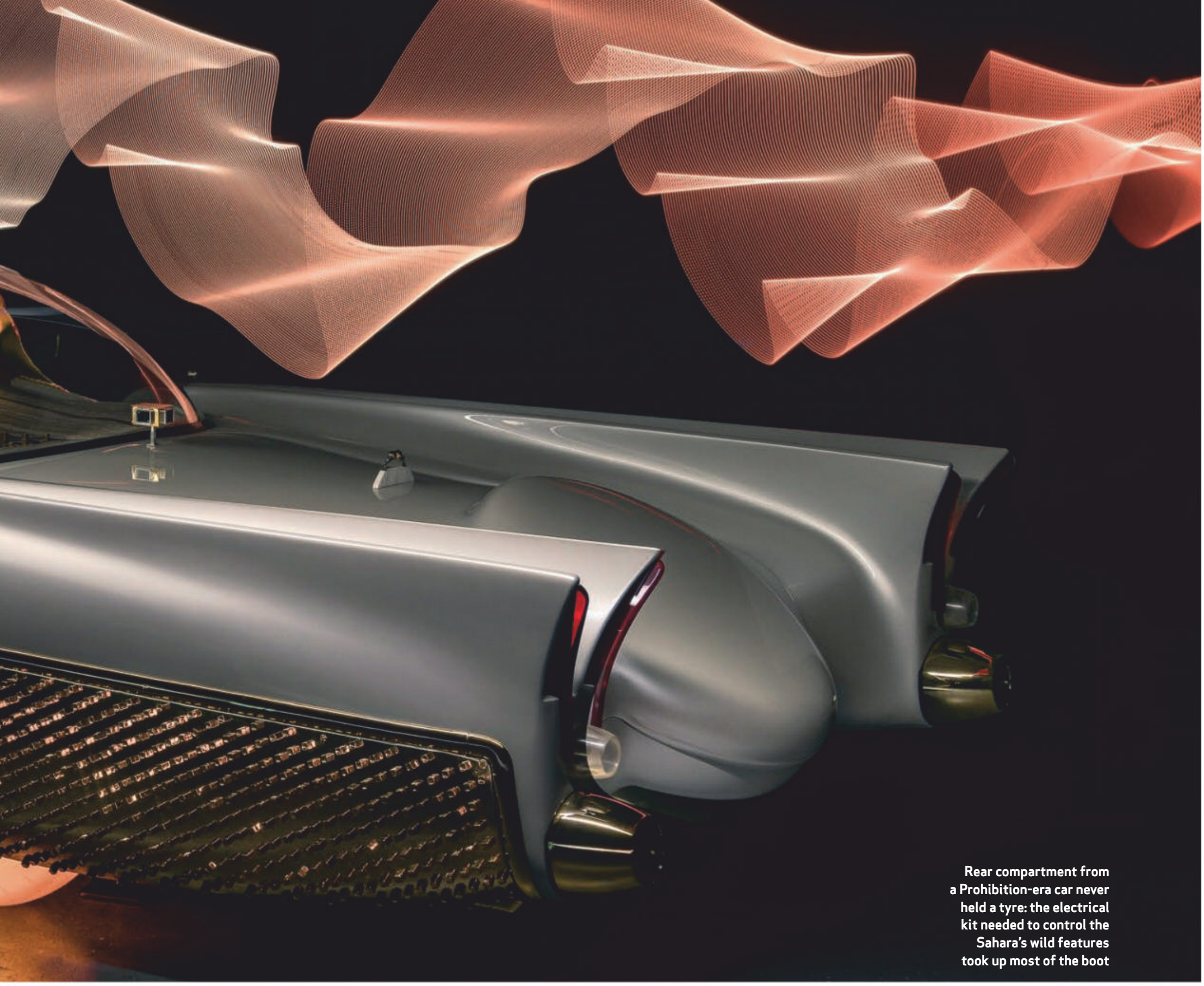
Eager to once again share the car with the world, Klairmont and Goodyear hatched an ambitious plan to put it on display at the Geneva Motor Show in 2019. But it quickly became clear that the costs of recreating the pneumatic Neothane tyres would prove prohibitive. Unbowed, and with just 40 days to find a solution, Buckley and Streetsboro, Ohio, firm The Technology House devised a way of creating five bespoke tyres that were capable of being driven on. “We formed the recreations using an eight-piece silicone mould made from a vintage Kelsey tyre, and cast solid – rather than pneumatic – urethane tyres on reproduction Golden Sahara II wheels,” says Buckley. “Like concrete, urethane produces heat as it cures – 209°F [98°C] in this case. The LEDs were rated to 194°F [90°C], so we installed three strips in case they failed – that’s why the tyres are so much brighter today than they were in period.”

With a similarly tight schedule for reviving the rest of the car, a full nut-and-bolt restoration was out of the question. “Getting it to Geneva was a repair – we were putting lipstick on it,” says Olsen. “We thought we could get away with just cleaning the interior, but it was mouldy and damp so it wasn’t to be – it had to be completely redone. We managed to match the material with a period fabric, but we had to totally remove the paint and the wiring was really bad. Customisers back in the day tended to use materials that were not initially intended for cars, so the type and gauge of wire varies wildly – it was a delicate balance between trying to preserve the way it was done originally, but still having those features demonstrable today.”

The further the team went, the clearer it became that some of the gadgets touted during its time on the show circuit had been talked up – unsurprising given Street’s flair as a showman. “Whether he was testing things, or whether he had the vision but simply hadn’t done it yet, some features just weren’t there,” says Olsen. “For example, the front bumper cones with antennae on them. Street had talked about the car having radar but there was no such system, though he may have applied for a patent.” Street had also widely boasted of a 525bhp ‘high-octane’ engine, but beneath the bonnet lay a



As found: the trick pearlescent paint turned yellow over time – perhaps the reason the car was pulled from the show scene



Rear compartment from a Prohibition-era car never held a tyre: the electrical kit needed to control the Sahara's wild features took up most of the boot

seized-solid 318cu in 'Y-block' V8 with a two-barrel carb, as found in a standard Lincoln Capri. "There was a little bit of showmanship involved, but that's part of the car's allure," says Olsen. "It's 80% accurate, 20% showmanship."

Speakeasy Customs managed to turn the job around in just three months to be ready for Geneva, but not everything went according to plan. The car was damaged in transit and the bumper cones had to be hastily recreated using filler and metallic vinyl, leading to a second restoration at Danrr Auto Body in Lake in the Hills, Illinois, once the Sahara II had been repatriated from Switzerland. As well as being repainted, the shape of the nose was altered to more accurately reflect period images from the early '60s – Speakeasy's faithful restoration seems to have included a dent in the front valance, after the car bottomed out on a kerb at some point during Street's ownership.

In addition to conventional restoration techniques, technology that was inconceivable in the 1950s – even to Street – played a key part in both rebuilds. Alonzo kicked things off by using a 3D printer to replace the hubcap fins that had gone missing during the car's internment. "First they were 3D scanned, then printed from a material that could be buffed and polished," explains Buckley, who played a vital role in the project. "They resembled the originals so closely it was almost impossible to tell them apart." Recreating a damaged tail-light lens required more intricate work, says Olsen: "All four look the same, but they are all completely different. We had to scan one by hand and 3D print it in solid white plastic. That piece was then used to create a mould, into which we poured acrylic that matched the colour of the lens."

Perhaps the biggest challenge during the ongoing restoration has been deciphering and reviving the complex electrical systems, which had been created without thought to future repairs and, crucially, without a schematic drawing. The team started where it felt most comfortable, with the television. "When we got it out, it had the same UHF/VHF connectors I remembered as a kid – I had flashbacks to hooking up my Atari games system," laughs Olsen. "As well as powering the TV, we were able to feed a signal via a small, hidden DVD player, so we can loop period footage of Jim Street displaying the vehicle." Some of the more intricate gizmos are still on the to-do list, including the touchpad steering with its hydraulic solenoid pack and separate power-steering pump, not to mention a fearsome wiring harness. "It isn't currently hooked up, but all the parts are there to restore it," says Buckley. Klairmont, Olsen and Buckley's enthusiasm for the project is palpable, and it's surely only a matter of time before the car's out-of-this-world gadgetry is once again wowing the crowds.

The Golden Sahara II's enduring appeal is no doubt partly due to its disappearance while at the peak of its power to amaze, yet the reason why remains a mystery. "The paint deteriorated so badly it was probably due for restoration when Jim put it into hibernation," suggests Olsen, "and the availability of tyres may have played a part." Goodyear's experiments with urethane ended in the '60s – despite their breathtaking looks they lost traction in the wet, became unstable at more than 65mph and melted under heavy braking. "Also, Street had travelled across the US for three or four years, and I've been told by people who knew him that he was just tired."

In the end, perhaps technology caught up with Street and, rather than see his beloved 'car of the future' become a relic of the past, he chose to quit while he was ahead. Whatever the reason, now at last his legacy lives on.

Thanks to *Goodyear (goodyear.com); Klairmont Kollections (klairmontkollections.com)*

GRAND PRIX EN MINIATURE

Racing cars converted for the road have a special appeal, none more so than the exotic twin-cam Amilcar C6, the fastest *voiturette* of its era

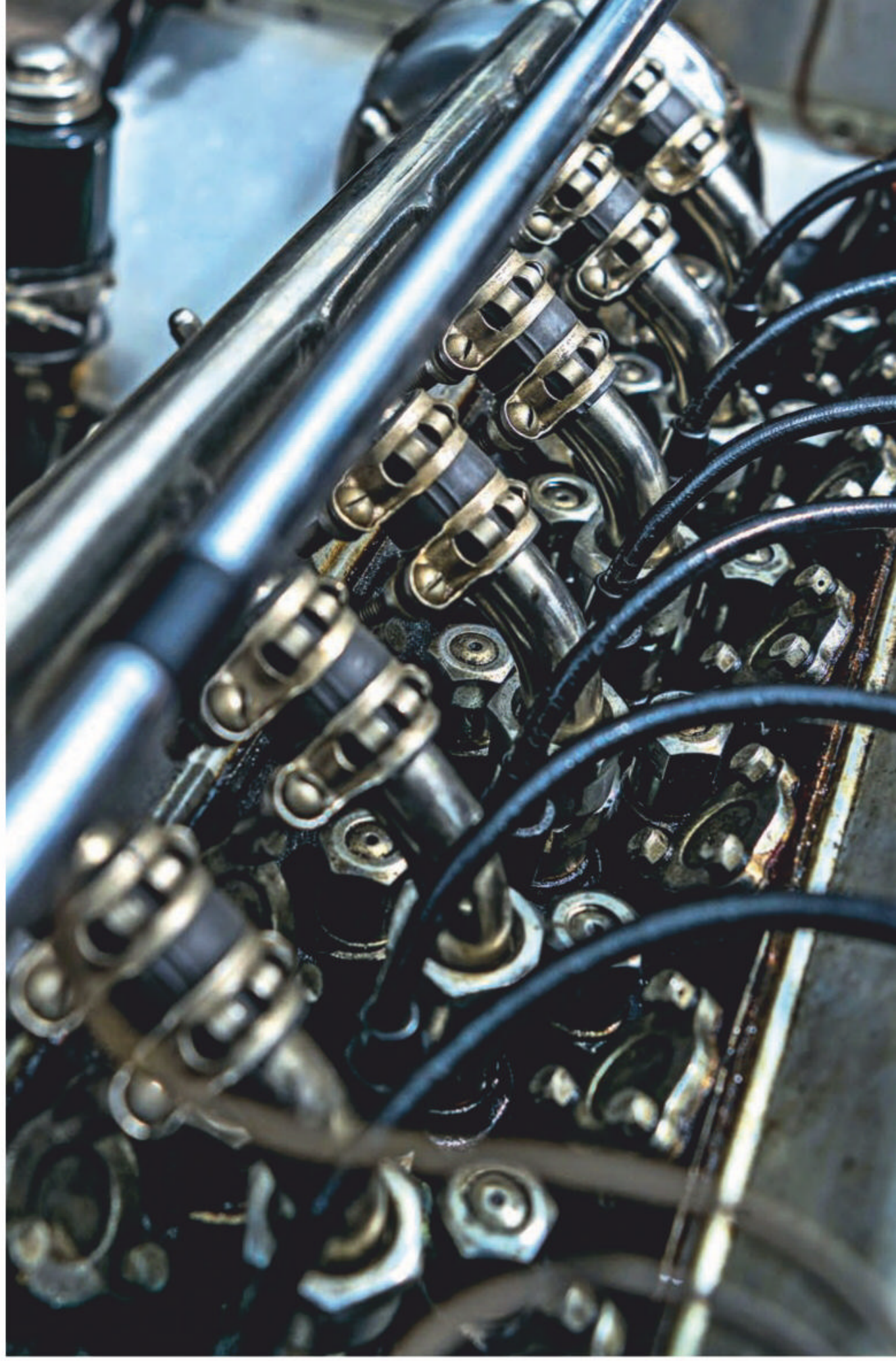
WORDS **MICK WALSH** PHOTOGRAPHY **OLGUN KORDAL**

The much-missed technical illustrator Bob Freeman had a great eye for mechanical form. From JAP twin to Merlin V12, beautiful engines quickly fired his artistic ardour, and the gorgeous twin-cam Amilcar 'six' was just such a motor that had Freeman digging out his pencil and sketchbook. Lift the low, straight bonnet on this compact Gallic great and it's easy to see why the design, masterminded by Amilcar's engineering chief André Morel, inspired one of Freeman's finest works.

This 1100cc racing gem, which powered the fabulous Type CO (fixed-head, roller-bearing-crank specification) and the detuned semi-production C6 (later detachable heads, and plain bearings), is one of the best-looking of all vintage engines. Appearing similar to one bank of the legendary Delage V12, its camshafts were driven by spur gears at the rear, while a finned Zoller supercharger sat snugly at the nose of the crankcase. Works CO racers claimed 83bhp at 5600rpm, while even the C6 gave 62bhp.

The dry-sump, double-overhead-cam straight-six was fitted into a low, well-braced but extensively drilled chassis with a neatly contoured doorless body. The bonnet line was just 33in tall. The oil tank hung low between the dumb irons at the front, and the six-into-one exhaust ran outside, racer style, to a neat pointed tail that contained the fuel tank. All up, the 'production' C6 weighed just 550kg and the factory confirmed its 100mph performance with a test at Montlhéry near Paris in February 1928.

With its driver and passenger sitting low beside the driveline, the Amilcar 'six' looked like a scaled-down Grand Prix machine. Beautifully



'You really feel part of the Amilcar C6, a rare sensation for the era that only Grand Prix Delage drivers experienced'

made with immense pride by the team in the Seine-Saint-Denis works in northern Paris, these *voiturettes* dominated the 1100cc class all over Europe in the late 1920s.

For years I've admired surviving Amilcar 'sixes', be it the fabulous Type MCO *monoplace* yowling around Vintage Montlhéry or among a peaceful Amilcar picnic group at VSCC Prescott. To finally get behind the wheel has been a long-held ambition.

After one glance into the tight footwell it's clear that narrow shoes are essential to work the centre-throttle pedal layout. The array of nine gauges across the stylish engine-turned dashboard includes twin Jaeger rev counters, one for each cam of the twin's heart. So fanatical was restorer Bernard Harding that he also mounted a fuel-flow meter in the passenger footwell. The old four-spoke steering wheel has been replaced by a more elegant three-spoke that looks straight from a Grand Prix Maserati. There's a wonderful range of modifications fitted by Harding, including a passenger handle based around a motorcycle throttle grip and a clutch of washers for the battery clamp made from drilled-out Franc coins. Every aspect has been fastidiously thought out and fettled.

Firing up begins by pressurising the tank with a hand pump. With Ki-gas primed and ignition fully retarded, the modified starter avoids the task of finding a helper to turn it over manually from the front. The little engine barks into life with a glorious rasp that quickly drowns out the noise of gears and blower. The sharp sound belies its junior capacity.

The gearbox requires careful feel to find first because it's easy to move the swept-back lever too far forward into reverse. But once away the transmission is a total delight, fast and precise. The super-responsive engine makes it a treat to double-declutch, with the rapid downshifts into corners accompanied by that distinctive exhaust through the fishtail pipe close behind.

Every aspect of the chassis is communicative. The steering action is easy and direct, while the later hydraulic brakes have instant feel and power. Within a few miles the car inspires confidence, and through the turns its balance contradicts its vintage age. The CO and C6 must have felt a revelation in the 1920s with their low seating positions and thoroughbred controls. Even on the skinny 19in tyres, the handling feels wonderfully neutral, begging ever-faster cornering speeds as the 'six' revs away eagerly. Push harder and the weight of the oil tank and the blower up front develops into understeer, but the overall impression is of a jazz-age Lotus Seven. You really feel part of the car, a rare sensation for the era that only Grand Prix Delage drivers experienced.

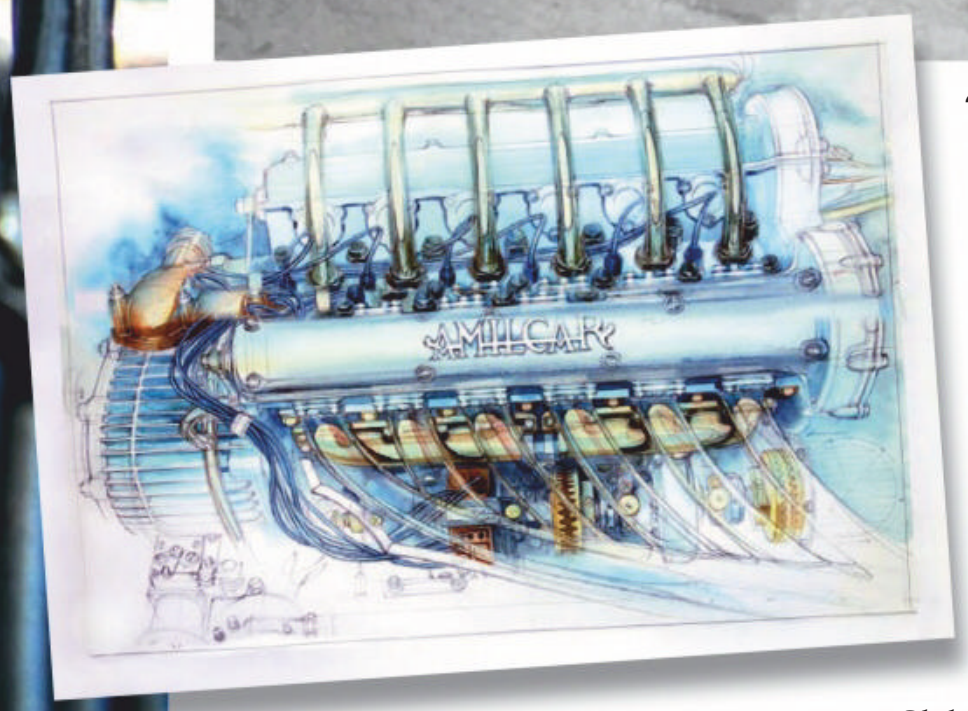
The C6 is a joy to command, its delicate feel emphasising its neat, quality design and construction. Little wonder these great cars



The straight-six is engineering as art, as illustrator Freeman's intricate watercolour proves (inset)



'Bill' Humphreys' immaculate C6 warms up for the 1930 500 Miles Race at Brooklands



were competitive throughout the 1930s, and in early vintage racing gave ERAs a tough time with John Tozer's determined efforts.

Vernon Balls imported seven C6s, which were no doubt a challenge to sell with the initial £725 price being £200 more than a Bugatti Type 37, when a Riley Brooklands Nine cost only £420.

Balls also offered the C6 as a road car, with starter, dynamo, lights, mudguards, windscreen and hood fitted at extra cost.

The factory, meanwhile, had ambitions to run a C6 at Le Mans but never reached the required minimum production run of 50 cars, although Balls did enter a team in the Ards TT in 1928 and '29. Fastest in their class, they all failed to finish.

Amilcar C6s were very active at Brooklands, where they proved super-fast but gained an unfair reputation for fragility. For the prestigious Junior Car Club's 200 Miles Race in October 1927, Balls entered three cars with works support. It was the dream UK debut: class domination and a 2-3-4 result overall, just failing to catch Malcolm Campbell's winning Bugatti.

Balls saw motor racing as a great promotional tool and persisted with the 'sixes' but with plain bearings rather than the factory's special roller



The short tail and long nose betray the Amilcar C6's racing intentions – low-slung, purposeful and for sporting drivers

bearings. They stood up to high revving around the bumpy Brooklands banking.

"They had excellent acceleration and would run up to 6500rpm," recalled Balls to Bill Boddy in a 1972 interview. "They were the most marvellous cars." Balls lapped Brooklands at a remarkable 103.76mph in the supercharged 1100cc C6 during the 1928 season, and this success drew wealthy enthusiasts to Balls' central London Amilcar showroom at 96 High Holborn.

The early history of this C6, first registered YW 91, is unclear, but its first links are to Balls' works driver Beris Harcourt-Wood. Within a few years the car had been acquired by WE 'Bill' Humphreys and became one of the quickest C6s thanks to preparation and development by Alec Francis. The distinctive black C6, already four years old, was entered for the 1931 500 Miles Race and the low *voiturette* was dwarfed by the heavy Bentley big guns as it rasped around at 100mph. It looked set for a class win until the front axle broke with just three laps to go.

Humphreys persisted with the C6, with Francis fitting the car with special camshafts and commissioning Amherst Villiers to make a new supercharger that blew at 16psi. Humphreys had the chassis chromium plated during one winter strip-down, making the C6 instantly recognisable.

Later owners included RF Oats, who removed all of the tuning and ran it very successfully in unblown form with twin carbs – it still recorded 96mph laps during the 1934 season!

The car was then acquired by custard magnate F Monkhouse and, together with racer Harry Clayton, he ran a pair of Amilcars at British events. With new tracks at Crystal Palace and Donington, plus the revised Brooklands Mountain Circuit, the Amilcars were tuned for each event, with engines and parts regularly interchanged. Both cars were fitted with Lockheed hydraulic brakes and a special wide-track I-section front axle was used. Clayton recorded a 121.5mph lap at Brooklands in '37.

Both ex-Clayton C6s were put into storage through WW2, but, planning for peacetime, Bugatti man Peter Hampton acquired the Humphreys car. During the Normandy Landings in 1944, Hampton's left arm was severely wounded by shrapnel and any ambitions to race were thwarted by his disability.

A year later the C6's performance reputation still held strong, and Weybridge garage owner Owen Finch bought the Clayton/Monkhouse team C6s and had them converted for the road with the registrations NPA 217 and MPC 702. Resplendent in new dark-green paint and with quickly removable mudguards, they were regular class contenders at the first post-war events including Gransden Lodge and Prescott's reopening. Like all tall drivers, Finch looked an ill fit in the cramped cockpit, his bulky physique making it look toy-like as he enthusiastically gunned it up Prescott and around Blandford Camp. Parts were shared to keep the cars running, but Finch sold them in 1950. NPA 217, with wide track and Villiers blower, went to Vic Hern; the Humphreys car continued to compete with new owner George Fisher until offered for sale in 1961. It would remain with the new owner for the following 58 years.

Looking for something faster than his Alvis 12/50, Bernard Harding spotted an advertisement for the well-known Amilcar C6. It came complete with a very heavy, crude trailer, and Harding immediately competed in Vintage Sports-Car Club events, beginning with Silverstone on his first weekend of ownership. The Alvis was enlisted to tow the new acquisition to competitive outings, and early appearances included Goodwood where he lined up with two other C6s against seven ERAs. Although the handling of Harding's C6 initially proved a challenge, it was soon much-improved with development. With oil leaks sorted and running on 80% methanol, the car became competitive. After two busy circuit racing and hillclimb seasons, he capped 1963 with the Boxing Day meeting at Brands Hatch and braved a snowstorm until the C6's rear axle failed.

This was to prove Harding's last race: the plan was just an engine rebuild over the winter, but the strip-down turned into a full restoration. Various projects distracted Harding from the task (including learning to fly), but by the 1980s retirement allowed his focus to return to the C6. The decision was made during the meticulous rebuild to prepare it for the road, with work tuning the C6 for pump fuel. Other practical modifications included a Scintilla starter and dynamo, just as fitted by Balls, while the authentic 19in-tall wheels were reinstated. Harding logged 6000 hours on the restoration and many aspects of this fabulous machine highlight his attention to detail. The final touch was securing the YV 91 works registration.

As well as Amilcar Register events, Harding and his immaculate black C6 were a highlight of Brooklands Reunions in the following 20 years, where in 2003 it won the trophy for the 'car the judges would most like to take home'. With the original exhaust system made by Owen Finch refitted, including the Brooklands silencer and the fishtail, the C6 sounded as sharp as it looked.

This great little car is a wonderful tribute to Harding, a brilliant old-school engineer who died in 2019. As with all his machines, Harding's focus was as much the design and precise fettling as it was the driving experience. Born in 1924 in Calcutta, where his father was stationed with the Royal Army Military School, Harding was educated at Charterhouse. He joined the Royal Engineers as soon as he was old enough at the start of WW2 and ended up back in India where he maintained everything from steamrollers to small power stations.

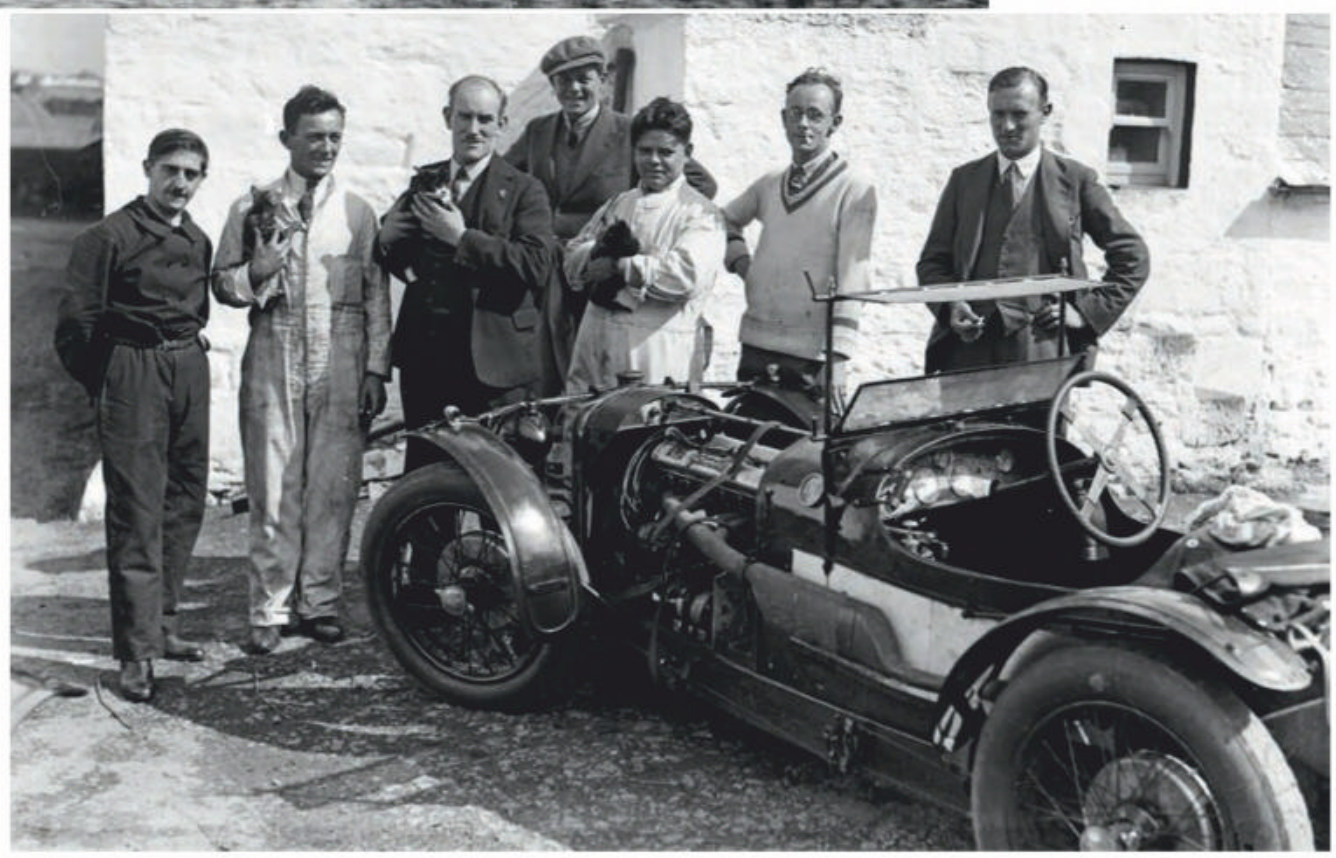
With peacetime Harding resumed his academic career at the University of Birmingham, where he studied engineering to Masters level and rode a Vincent Black Shadow motorcycle.



The late Bernard Harding and the Amilcar C6 in 1998, back at Brooklands where the experienced Harry Clayton lapped at 121.5mph in 1937







Left: Owen Finch finds the limit at Blandford Camp in 1949. Below: Vernon Balls (third from left) and crew at the '28 Ards TT, having adopted kittens as mascots

MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Upon joining the National Gas Turbine Establishment his projects included Concorde before he moved to the Fighting Vehicle Research and Development Establishment, at Chobham in Surrey, until he retired in 1984.

At Sprockets, his home near Woking, Harding owned and restored an eclectic range of machinery from vintage 'flat-tank' Nortons to his 1928 Frazer Nash. His daily transport was a pair of trusty Morris Minors. His interest in aviation continued with a DH Hornet Moth, which he flew and worked on. Never a blinkered marque obsessive, Harding was always keen to try different designs but the Amilcar C6 remained a keeper until his passing aged 95.

The Gallic jewel was meticulously maintained and kept cosseted inside a conservatory at his home. Even after his final trip to Brooklands in the Amilcar he continued to look after it into his 90s, taking the plugs out, lubricating the bores and regularly turning over the engine.

"As well as his excellent theoretical engineering knowledge, Bernard was a competent machinist," recalls his friend Peter Bignell. Harding took up painting in his later years, which, as with all his hobbies, he soon mastered. He never painted a picture of the long-treasured C6 but greatly admired Freeman's artwork. For those who discover these French masterpieces, the fascination is lasting. I'll never pass one without longing to see and hear that fabulous little twin-cam.

Thanks to *Dylan Miles (www.dylan-miles.com); Peter Bignell; Gilles Fournier. The C6 will be on display at Rétromobile (www.retromobile.com)*





Main: sleek front and skinny tyres encourage pressing on. Left: three-spoke steering wheel is a later addition

SPORTS FOR ALL

Proving that sports cars can have a social conscience, the Fiat Sport Spider, MG Midget and Honda S800 offer frugal but fast-appreciating open-top fun

WORDS **SIMON CHARLESWORTH** PHOTOGRAPHY **WILL WILLIAMS**


NHS 695F



Sports cars don't have to be the epitome of selfishness. The traditional notion that nothing should be allowed to cloud the senses or dilute your driving pleasure means the practicalities of packaging, multiple passengers, comfort, refinement, economy and even basic weather protection are often sidelined, leaving only the bare necessities.

This criticism, though, cannot be levelled at small sports cars such as the Honda S800, MG Midget and Fiat Sport Spider. These egalitarian machines maximise their modest attributes within legal speeds, while taking up a minimal amount of road space. Members of this less-is-more species make the most of their horsepower and, in doing so, reward their drivers without running the risk of capture by a speed trap.

Broadly speaking, only two nations truly understood the formula: Britain, which fathered the concept; and Italy, which helped to endow it with greater élan and sophistication. At least, that was the case until a new player gatecrashed the party in the '60s – causing disruption akin to Jimi Hendrix's debut at the London Polytechnic. Not content with embarrassing Britain's leaky kick-start motorcycles, Japan was now picking a fight with the top of the sports car pops.

Honda's contender was unconventional, yet still featured traces of arcane pre-WW2 practice: here was a small, high-revving sub-1-litre sports car that was underpinned by a ladder-frame chassis and, initially at least, chain-drive. The origins of the S800 date to the 1962 S360, a prototype Soichiro Honda had instigated as a small car for the Japanese market. He briefed the team of young engineers to give the S360 a competition flavour, and that the car must be something they themselves would like to own.

Although not produced, the prototype evolved into the Japan-only S500. The S360's 33bhp 356cc 'four', which had been developed from Honda's tiny T360 truck unit, grew into a 44bhp, 531cc motor. In 1964 the S600 came along – bringing with it a new fixed-head-coupé sister – and was powered by a 57bhp 606cc engine. The S600 was the first Honda car to be mass-produced and offered in left-hand-drive markets, paving the way for the 791cc, 70bhp S800 in 1966, which went on sale in Britain in 1967. The cleaner, safer S800M was introduced in 1968, but it never reached its intended US market. Ironically, the star-spangled home of the gas-guzzler claimed that the little Honda was too dirty. Production ended in 1970.

Outside and in, there is a hint of the Midget about Neil Barber's restored 1967 S800, which is a favourite among his collection. Although there is marginally less room, the slightly offset driving position and the gentle shiver of scuttle shake will be familiar to MG owners. The S800 experience, though, is dominated by the unique persona of its bombastic miniature engine. A glimpse of the 11,000rpm rev counter raises a smile that never quite leaves your face.

'These egalitarian machines maximise their modest attributes within legal speeds, while taking up a minimal amount of road'





From top: sweet, high-revving 'four' is tiny but punches well above its weight; snug cockpit with offset pedal box; S800 is a riot on the road

HONDA S800 SPORT

Sold/number built 1966-'70/11,536
Construction steel body, steel chassis
Engine all-alloy, dohc 791cc 'four', quad constant-vacuum carburettors
Max power 70bhp @ 8000rpm
Max torque 49lb ft @ 6000rpm
Transmission four-speed manual, RWD
Suspension: front independent, by wishbones, torsion bars, anti-roll bar **rear** live axle, coil springs, trailing arms, Panhard rod; telescopic dampers f/r **Steering** rack and pinion
Brakes discs front, drums rear
Length 10ft 11¼in (3334mm)
Width 4ft 7¼in (1403mm)
Height 4ft (1219mm)
Wheelbase 6ft 7in (2007mm)
Weight 1700lb (771kg)
0-60mph 13.6 secs
Top speed 97mph **Mpg** 28
Price new £935 (1968, inc PT)
Price now £15-30,000

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Once on the move, initially there is a bit of cam chatter overlaying the chanting gears. The tiny gearstick for the four-speed 'box is so light and precise it's like flicking a toggle switch. The throttle, though, has to be shut off crisply to avoid riding the clutch. There is a slight flat-spot in the middle of the bottom half of this car's rev range, but the twin-cam, quad-carb star attraction soon clears its fluffiness in second gear at 35mph and 5000rpm. At first there is an almost abrupt, Wankel-esque blatting from the wicked little fiend, then it's as if you're in the midst of a wailing dive-bomber raid as the tacho needle spins around to 9000rpm. The Honda doesn't need a fifth gear, for that would spoil the fun and dilute its manic nature. The sound is like a howling motorcycle while the keening gears climb in their intensity, creating a glorious noise that must be bothering the next county.

The brake pedal is sharp and effective, if a bit wooden – rather like the steering. Jump off the throttle and it spits and pops on the overrun like a ring-a-ding-ding two-stroke. The ride is fine and, away from the straight and narrow, the nimble S800 rolls slightly, but it flies around corners with only a touch of front floatiness. Dynamically it does everything well but, to be blunt, the chassis' main job is to cradle a headline-grabbing motor that's capable of providing the maximum performance from the fewest cubic centimetres.

'The incy-wincy Spider differs from the rest of our trio in having been available new in the UK only by special order'

It took a while, but Fiat had obviously noticed how well tuners and coachbuilders had been doing with its factory underpinnings. Firms as diverse as Siata, Moretti and Abarth had either fitted new bodies or bolstered the base Fiats' performance, but these specialist machines were produced on a tiny scale compared to the appetite of the sports car export market.

The basis for the 1965 Spider was Project 100G, the 850, which evolved from the 1955 600 and was designed to counter the Simca 1000. As one member of a family of 850s – along with the saloon, the Multipla-replacing Familiare and the Coupé – this incy-wincy Spider differed from its siblings in having been designed and built by Bertone rather than in-house. The Spider is also unique in this trio in that it was available only by special order in the UK.

The pretty 843cc Spider made the most of having its drivetrain mounted in the rear: it featured a low, sleek front end with an elegant nose – a shape that stands out in our group today. Its clean lines were diluted slightly in the 1968 Sport Spider makeover, which brought larger, repositioned headlamps, plus a 52bhp, 903cc iteration of the overhead-valve engine fed by a single twin-choke carburettor.

The Sport Spider is the only model here to have been directly replaced by its manufacturer.

FIAT 850 SPORT SPIDER SIII

Sold/number built 1965-'73/124,000
Construction all-steel monocoque
Engine iron-block, alloy-head, ohv 903cc 'four', single twin-choke carb
Max power 52bhp @ 5200rpm
Max torque 48lb ft @ 4000rpm
Transmission four-speed manual, RWD
Suspension independent, at **front** by wishbones, transverse leaf spring **rear** semi-trailing arms, coil springs; telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar f/r
Steering worm and sector
Brakes discs front, drums rear
Length 12ft 5in (3782mm)
Width 4ft 11in (1501mm)
Height 4ft (1219mm)
Wheelbase 6ft 7¾in (2027mm)
Weight 1624lb (745kg)
0-60mph 16.2 secs
Top speed 93mph **Mpg** 35
Price new Not listed in UK
Price now £10-20,000



Above: later interior lacks some of the chrome-laden charm of the early cars, but is still chic. Below: rear-engined 850 is the most refined of the group



Lively original 843cc 'four' grew to 903cc (as here) from 1968, and with a single twin-choke carb it musters 52bhp

Tim Milnes' 1973 Sport Spider is a US-market Series III built during the final few months of production alongside the first of the X1/9s. Restored 30 years ago and fitted with uprated front brakes, high-backed X1/9 seats and 124 Spider alloys, the car is used frequently.

The nonconformist Spider might stand alone with its sleek styling, but the driving position is typically Italian. The narrow pedalbox is so offset it feels as if it's located in the passenger footwell, while your knees are caressed by the steering wheel. The wood-effect dash trim, meanwhile, strives for a degree of sophistication that isn't present in the front-engined pair.

The Spider's steering box is sharper and quicker than the Honda's rack; it's also incredibly consistent from lock-to-lock, without any slop or dithering, but it does lack the feel of rack and pinion. It scampers around corners with minimal roll, while the absence of weight over the front makes the suspension bop slightly over the road's furrows, lumps and bumps.

As well as being the largest car here, the Spider is also the most refined, its sweet engine slung way out back sounding almost subdued, and the pleasure of keeping a hold of each mile per hour through every twist and turn becomes almost as addictive as it is easy.

The tractable 903cc 'four' shoves you out of corners in a far more progressive manner than the Honda. The ride is good and there aren't any suggestions of rear-engined treachery. The Spider's throttle is stiffer, while its four-speed gearbox has an easy change with a longer throw and a wider gate, yet is both positive and engages cleanly. Its brakes combine the best feel and efficiency of the three and, being Italian, the Spider is always up for revving *con forza*. The second choke kicks in at 3000rpm and it feels at its most potent from 4-5000rpm, when the exhaust-driven soundtrack is at maximum fizz.

After the foreign invasion, the Midget feels – and is – the oldest design, with the oldest name and the longest production run. It is also, arguably, the classic with which most enthusiasts associate the 'small affordable sports car' tag. After a six-year gap in the Midget bloodline, the name returned on a classically BMC proposition: effectively an upmarket, badge-engineered version of the 46bhp, 948cc MkII Austin-Healey Sprite – itself an evolution of the 1958 original. The 1961 Midget's pretty cheekiness was the work of Syd Enever and Geoffrey Healey, a design that clearly influenced the Honda.

Improvements came thick and fast: in 1962 it was up to 1098cc and 56bhp; the MkII of '64 got 59bhp; and maximum Midget was achieved in 1966 with the MkIII as featured here, powered by a detuned 65bhp 1275cc A-series from the Mini Cooper 'S'. Later iterations concentrated on aesthetics, until 1974 when the Spridget's looks and handling were brutalised to satisfy US safety regulations, and it suffered the ignominy of having the engine from its Canley rival, the Triumph Spitfire, foisted upon it. The Midget finally died in 1979, without a son and heir.

The specification of Mike Guest's 1969 MkIII Midget does warrant scrutiny, because it has been modified in the way a keen 1960s owner might have done. Guest has mixed and matched modern versions of period go-faster elements that were available from the likes of Downton, BMC Special Tuning and Speedwell. In essence, this Downton-spec 1293cc Midget is the car Abingdon refused to build, after evaluating a Cooper 'S'-engined Midget and finding that its pace was enough to bite at the MGB's heels.

Nothing is superfluous in or on the Midget. The narrowest car here, it has the roomiest pedalbox despite it also being home to a headlamp dipper switch that doubles up as a clutch-foot rest. There's enough shoulder room to allow you to sit in it, rather than the feeling that you're sitting on the Spider or the S800.

Twist the key, give two throttle pumps and the Midget bursts into life with an unfamiliar sound, the guttural snorting of a Weber twin-choke carburettor drowning out the chattering rockers. It is the least refined of our set, with the firmest ride and the least effective brakes, but that really is the end of the moaning. The steering is sublime – its weighting, gearing and eagerness to converse are faultless – while the alert front end of this car has been further enhanced by polybushes and an $1\frac{1}{16}$in anti-roll bar. Tackle a few bends and the Midget places you at the fulcrum of its delicately balanced world, establishing itself as today's handling king. It manages to be crisply quick-witted while – just like the other two – avoiding nervousness. To go better, you'd probably need something with Colin Chapman's initials on its nose.

It's unfair to compare a modified car with a largely original pairing, of course, but I've driven Spridgets in many a tune and the one consistency has been these cars' eagerness to dazzle and amuse while scampering over the Tarmac. In standard SU-fed 1275cc tune, propulsion is of the torquey mid-range variety, with sorties above 4000rpm being accompanied by a breathless thrashiness that pains the ears of anyone with even a moderate amount of mechanical sympathy. Not here: this 1293cc ode to Downton transforms the A-series' ability to rev without affecting its road manners, tractability or throttle response, and is the perfect complement to the amicable chassis.

The four-speed gearchange is as mechanically precise as a Lee-Enfield. The aural experience is a rich layer of gossiping gear whine, sidedraught gargling and blatting tailpipe. From 4500rpm, the hard-edged duet from induction and exhaust dominates the soundtrack. Not that revving it hard is necessary, because 50mph comes up at 3000rpm in top, and 60mph at 3300rpm – bang in the middle of the 1293's torque band.

So which is best? It's a personal question with a personal answer. The Midget wasn't just huge fun, but it transported me back to being 19 again, acting like a welcome smile in a world full of frowns. Depending on your priorities, however – be it style, handling or powerplant – there is an obvious choice for you to pick. What might not be so obvious is that these little marvels are capable of serving up far greater thrills than their modest specifications would suggest. Thrills that can – and frequently do – surpass those delivered by far more exotic offerings, with equally rarefied price-tags.

Thanks to *Honda S800 Sports Car Club (hondas800sportscarclub.co.uk); Midget and Sprite Club (midgetandspriteclub.com); Fiat Motor Club GB (fiatmotorclubgb.co.uk)*







Clockwise from main: Mike Guest enjoys uprated MG; Tim Milnes with late Spider; Neil Barber and his superb S800





Non-standard wheel helps cramped cabin. Above right: tweaked engine gives the MG extra zip. Below: the Midget loves curves

'The Midget places you at the fulcrum of its delicately balanced world, establishing itself as the handling king of the day'

MG MIDGET MkIII

Sold/number built 1966-'69/13,722
Construction steel monocoque
Engine all-iron, ohv 1275cc 'four', twin SU carburettors (single Weber here)
Max power 65bhp @ 6000rpm
Max torque 72lb ft @ 3000rpm
Transmission four-speed manual, RWD
Suspension: front independent, by wishbones, coil springs **rear** live axle, semi-elliptic leaf springs; lever-arm dampers f/r **Steering** rack and pinion
Brakes discs front, drums rear
Length 11ft 3in (3461mm)
Width 4ft 5in (1345mm)
Height 4ft 1in (1264mm)
Wheelbase 6ft 8in (2032mm)
Weight 1512lb (686kg)
0-60mph 14.1 secs
Top speed 94mph **Mpg** 30
Price new £683 18s 2d
Price now £5-13,000

DREAM WEAVER

Stylist Gérard Godfroy decided to build the DS Citroën never offered – a two-door coupé. Meet the stunning Grand Palais

WORDS **JON PRESSNELL** PHOTOGRAPHY **OLGUN KORDAL**





Longer rear deck lid is an inevitable result of the more compact glasshouse. Above: Grand Palais has 1961-on DS dash style

We've all got them. Those 'what if' cars. The cars that the manufacturer somehow never got around to making. Dream projects. But sometimes, just occasionally, there's a brave soul who has the talent and the resources to make a reality out of their dream. Such a man is Gérard Godfroy, and the result is a pillarless two-door DS coupé that doesn't just look gorgeous, but also appears as if it's rolled straight off a Citroën production line.

As you might expect, the DS Grand Palais is not the work of an amateur: Godfroy is a well-known automotive and industrial designer. At Peugeot for two and a half years, he established the initial design for the 205 and then spent five years with coachbuilder Heuliez, where he was responsible for the Alpine V6 – and for the life-saving facelift to create the Citroën Visa II. In 1983 he began an 11-year period as a designer for Venturi, while also working on other projects such as the amphibious Hobbycar. His industrial design has notably included the red-painted Manitou lifting and construction-site machinery seen in every corner of France.

The starting point for the Grand Palais was simple, says the Normandy-based Godfroy. His coachbuilder colleague and long-time collaborator Christophe Bihr wanted to convert a DS saloon into a replica Chapron 'factory' cabriolet. "I said that with our shared abilities we could do something much more original," says Godfroy. "There are so many people doing cabriolets, so I persuaded him to do a coupé.

"Citroën never built a coupé. I wanted to do something that was different from the Chapron hardtops and closer to what the DS designer, Flaminio Bertoni, had done with the saloon. With a coupé I could do something more personal, but respecting the spirit of the original – which meant a very curved back window, and rounded contours at the rear. I also wanted a pillarless glasshouse, because with the windows wound down I actually find a car like that more agreeable to drive than something fully open."

The first drawings date from 2012, after which Godfroy worked on a computer. Then he turned to the shaping of the buck, once the basic contours had been established by means of a slender tubular framework. The final form was arrived at using blocks of polyurethane foam sculpted painstakingly by hand – echoing the technique of plaster sculpting Bertoni used.

"I suppose I'm something of a sculptor myself, because I found that the rear was a real pleasure to do – to arrive at the right curvature in the two planes," says Godfroy. "I also wanted to get a bit more curvature into the rear wings – I wanted a much more rounded rear, to give more fluid lines and a more elegant reflection of light. On a 'factory' cabriolet the wings are much flatter, whereas here they bow out below the waistline crease. The idea was to retain the characteristics of the DS, but to take them to a higher level."

It was then down to Bihr to build the car, starting out with a 1968 'basking shark' DS21 carburettor saloon. From the scuttle back the new body is made entirely in glassfibre, married to a steel front end of the type introduced for 1963 and with doors – extended by 10cm – in glassfibre with steel reinforcements. More modern hinges and catches were used, and Godfroy is particularly proud of the quality 'thunk' with which the doors close.

The body understructure is based around a strengthened chassis with beefed-up sills, and aft of the door aperture on either side there's a stout A-shaped frame in folded steel, forming the centre pillar and the C-post. Also in steel is the closing panel for the boot. The glasshouse – lower than on a regular DS saloon – is completely new, with more robust front and rear pillars and a tubular perimeter frame for the roof.

"It's extremely rigid – there's no structural 'chattering' even if you wind down all of the windows," says Godfroy. "It's much stronger than the original. If you had a crash in a standard DS, the thing just came apart. This is far safer – you could have a roll-over accident and the roof wouldn't be crushed. Also the DS always rusted badly, so once we had finished the structure it was given cataphoric rust-proofing."

Despite the car's increased rigidity, Godfroy has established that the finished Grand Palais weighs within 10-20kg of a factory DS saloon: "What we put into the car in reinforcement is

"It's much stronger than the original: if you had a crash in a standard DS, the thing just came apart. This is far safer"









Clockwise from above: car is true to original artwork; Godfroy (left) and Bihr create outline with wire frame; shaping wings; rear window was a challenge

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compensated for by the lighter glassfibre panels."

Inevitably, the process of creating the car took time. "Christophe was under the pressure of a deadline – to get it done while I was still alive," jokes 73-year-old Godfroy. "We spent thousands of hours on the project, between 2014 and 2019. I worked for six months full-time on the design, so that was 5000 hours. Then it took 6000 hours to build it. That should discourage people who might want to do something similar!"

The most difficult bit was the glazing – and it is all in glass, from Pilkington, including the rear bay. Getting the operation of the windows correct was a significant challenge, according to Bihr, as was making sure that every detail was spot-on. The polished aluminium boot hinges, for example, were made by hand, and designed to echo the hinges on a regular DS. "It took some time, but we went with the idea and people seem to like them," says Godfroy.

The paint, by Stéphane Champeau of Arnage, is complemented by a delightful tobacco-brown leather interior by Laurent Debraise of Sellerie Debraise. Clever touches are everywhere, such as the way the radio has been moved towards the driver and the electric-window controls integrated into the middle of the dashboard.

"All of the interior was re-thought," explains Godfroy. "I had always felt that the design of the door trims on the DS wasn't to the same standard as the exterior – they were a bit slipshod – and I wanted something a bit different, too. The door pockets mimic the original DS dashboard style, and the side panels at the rear curve inwards to meet the seat backrest, with a chrome strip that dips slightly towards the back, echoing the car's waistline."

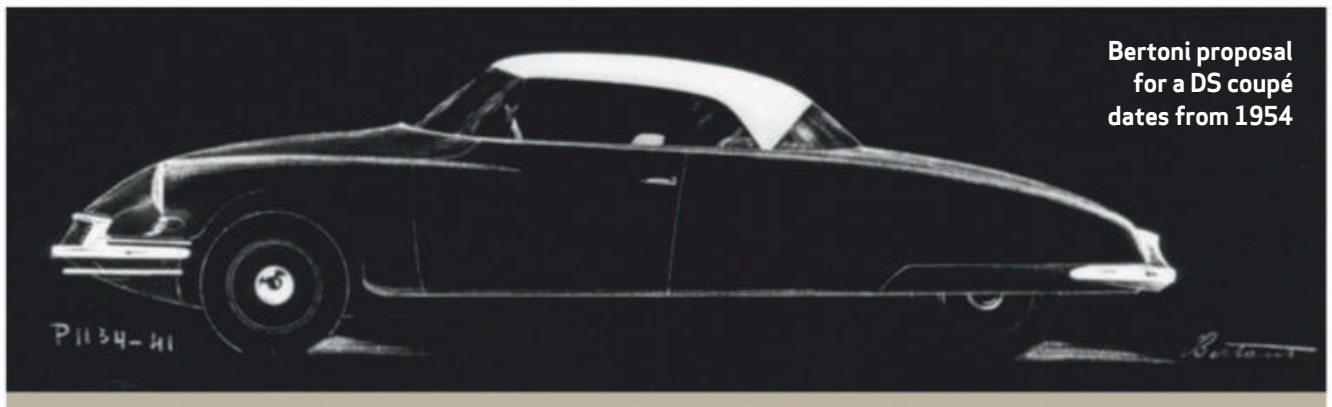
The cockpit would be further improved, he feels, with a new set of round instruments. An adaptation of the triple-dial cluster introduced for 1970 is one possibility, or maybe a two-dial set-up similar to that found on some Slough-built cars: "I want something that is nicely integrated. I don't want something like the aftermarket Jaeger instrument panel, which is expensive and yet still looks like an accessory."

So will the Grand Palais remain a one-off? That was originally the idea, according to Godfroy: "At the outset it was just something for our own pleasure. But with the amount of work that went into the car, it makes sense to build more than one – especially given the enthusiasm with which it has been received. Maybe we could do four or five per year. That would be perfect. I'd estimate the cost at €150,000, but I'm not sure. We can't do it at a loss."

> "At the outset it was just for our pleasure, but with the amount of work that went in, it makes sense to build more than one"



Indeed, since we photographed the Grand Palais an order for a second has been received. There's still the question of homologation for the French market, and Godfroy says that as a result he'd be interested in enquiries from the UK, where legislation is more accommodating. Meanwhile the car is fulfilling an important function, reckons its creator: "Above all, I'm delighted that people like it so much. In my profession, the important thing is to transmit an emotion – and this emotion seems to be shared with a good number of people."



Bertoni proposal for a DS coupé dates from 1954

OTHER COACHBUILT TAKES ON A DS COUPÉ

That Citroën never made a DS coupé and farmed out manufacture of the drophead to Chapron should come as no surprise. An estimated 4327 examples of the Traction Avant roadster had been made, plus a minuscule 728 of the coupé, and the lesson had evidently been learnt: there was no commercial case for making such models in-house – or even at all, in the case of a coupé.

So it was that sketches of a DS coupé by Flaminio Bertoni remained on the drawing board. Those seeking such a body could, however, turn to Chapron. The Levallois-based coachbuilder hand-crafted more than 70 four-seater coupés, across three different models, and 50 of a single design with 2+2 seating called Le Dandy. The closest in flavour to the Godfroy car is the original four-seater Le Paris of 1958, of which just nine examples were made; the subsequent Concorde and Le Léman four-seater Chapron coupés had a more squared-off roofline.

Rather different was the GT19, or Gété, marketed by tuner Hector Bossaert, which was built on a chassis shortened by 42cm and had styling by Frua; 13 were made, between 1960 and 1965. Less radical was the Ricou coupé of 1959, a cut-and-shut saloon built on an even shorter chassis. Only two were produced, but the Ricou set the template for various two-door adaptations of the DS that were used in rallying. Marseille-based tuner Barbero was another to follow this route. Finally, established coachbuilder Pichon-Parat made a handful of coupés featuring an angular glasshouse, some with front wings restyled to house Panhard 24 headlamps, and was latterly responsible for the short-wheelbase works rallying DS coupés.


Tidy Le Paris hints at some of Chapron's other designs


Just 13 of the Frua-designed Bossaert GT19 were built


Dumpy Ricou was basically just a shortened DS saloon


Short-wheelbase works rally car was campaigned in '69

CATCH ME IF YOU CAN

When two amateurs got closer to the action by posing as members of the press, these were the evocative results

WORDS **GREG MACLEMAN** PHOTOGRAPHY **HUGH MILLER/ROY COTTRILL**



From top: co-pilot Cottrill on the way to Prescott; KR200 loaded with kit for a weekend's camping

Back in the early 1960s, car-mad schoolboys Hugh Miller and Roy Cottrill spent their weekends in the summer pedalling their push-bikes to race and hillclimb venues all across the Midlands, from Shelsley Walsh and Prescott to Silverstone and Chateau Impney – a passion that led to the pair contributing to the country's pre-eminent motorsport title, *Autosport*.

"Once Roy turned 16 he upgraded to a moped, with me slipstreaming behind on a bike – that sped us up quite a bit," recalls Miller of his early days chasing the races. "He then got a Messerschmitt KR200 bubble car, which with only three wheels and no reverse gear was still classed as a motorcycle. He carried me from event to event as a passenger – possibly illegally!"

"All of the time we were taking photographs with our basic Zenit 3 single-lens reflex cameras, which were completely manual," explains Miller. "No meter, manual focus, not even automatic stop-down of aperture: you had to focus with the lens wide open, and then turn the ring to the right aperture before shooting. They were the cheapest SLRs around, and mainly showed the cars as small dots in the middle distance.

"We decided that we needed to get closer to



André Baldet raced his Moto Baldet Lotus Cortina against Mini Coopers, Jaguar Mk2s and Ford Anglias in the early '60s, as well as Doc Merfield's mighty V8-engined Cortina. Here's Baldet entering the Mallory Park hairpin in 1964

Tony Marsh pushes hard in his Lotus 18 on an autumn afternoon at Prescott in '61. Marsh was British hillclimb champ six times in, among others, a Cooper-JAP, an ex-F1 BRM and his own Marsh Special

Jim Clark's Ian Walker Team Lotus 30 heads for victory in the Guards Trophy at Mallory Park, 1964. Clark was 20 secs clear of Roy Pierpoint's Attila Mk3, with Roger Nathan's Brabham BT8 in third

the action, so we printed letterheads describing ourselves as 'Speed Photo Bromsgrove, specialists in motorsport photography', and proceeded to send them to event organisers asking for photographers' passes."

Much to the lads' surprise, the tactic worked and the y received press accreditation to several events. "In our letters, we usually said we would be submitting pictures to various motorsport magazines – and that's what we did," says Miller. "Usually these submissions were ignored, or we got a polite rejection. But in early 1964, Mike Kettlewell, then assistant editor of *Autosport*, rang to ask us to cover a driving test meeting at Chateau Impney." *Autosport* had a policy of covering a broad range of grassroots motorsport so, while it wasn't a particularly important event, it opened the door to future commissions – despite the magazine having no idea that its new star reporters were still in school!

"We did a report of a couple of hundred words under the byline 'RFC/HWM', which was printed but with no pictures – though to be fair, I can't remember whether they asked for any." The duo was then tasked with covering a string of meets throughout the summer and autumn of 1964, pottering in the Messerschmitt from Bromsgrove to Shelsley Walsh, Oulton Park or Chateau Impney, eventually progressing to full-page reports complete with two photographs.

"We were doing pretty well, but we did make a few blunders," remembers Miller. "One time, I used fixer instead of developer on the films, which wiped out all of the images. On another occasion we did the report and pictures okay, but I missed the deadline. I had to get the typed copy and photoprints to the last train from Birmingham to London on a Sunday night, in time to be picked up on Monday morning and processed for Friday publication. I was too young to drive, so this usually meant getting a late-night bus the 12 miles from Bromsgrove to Birmingham, walking to the station, then getting the bus home – but I missed the train. Our failure was compounded because I had to go to school on Monday, so wasn't able to get back to the station until that evening."

Miller's fledgling career as a motorsport photographer eventually came to a premature end when Kettlewell telephoned to discuss his latest assignment and, instead of getting through to the amateur snapper, he was answered by Miller's mother, who informed the assistant editor that her son couldn't come to the phone because he was at school. The commissions dried up, perhaps unsurprisingly, and Miller went on to study biochemistry at Oxford.

Despite enjoying a successful career in psychology, the enthusiast never lost his interest in photography – or motorsport. Now, after rediscovering a box of old snapshots, he and Cottrill have curated a book, *Prescott: Then and Now*, featuring their forgotten work from those carefree summers of the early 1960s.

Copies of Prescott: Then and Now are available from The Bugatti Trust, priced at £10 (01242 677201; www.bugatti-trust.co.uk)



Morgan Super Sports leads the chasing pack of Malvern three-wheelers at the start of a very wet two-seater race held at Silverstone in c1963

Renowned Bugatti enthusiast Jack Lemon Burton leans on the wheel of his early Type 35 in the paddock at Prescott in 1962. The marque fanatic would go on to become president of the Bugatti Owners' Club. Note the Rochdale GT among others in the background



David Prophet glances from his Lotus 32 during the '64 Goodwood Trophy at Mallory Park



Mike Hatton hustles along in his big-twin Cooper-JAP at Prescott Hill Climb in May 1963



EJ Blakeman with Mongrel-JAP – and well-waxed moustache – at Chateau Impney in 1963



A committed Sir John Whitmore pushes his Cobra to fourth in the 1965 TT at Oulton Park

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Not all hillclimb cars were exotic: here's Mike Watson, Tony Marsh's mechanic, in a much-modded Ford 100E at Chateau Impney, 1963

Basil Davenport gives a demonstration run in the GN Spider at Shelsley Walsh in the early 1960s. Davenport built the giant-slayer himself, driving the highly developed cyclecar to victories and course records at Shelsley in 1926, 1927 and 1928

HER NAME IS RIO...

...and she is a very rare beast. Yet this Panther curio is one of two examples of the Triumph-based 'mini Rolls-Royce' in enthusiast Peter Mayo's collection

WORDS **MARTIN BUCKLEY** PHOTOGRAPHY **JOHN BRADSHAW**

The Panther Rio was a car made for a market that never really existed, and created around a concept that was based on a flawed argument. The reasoning was that, in the teeth of a recession or a fuel crisis, a small number of very wealthy people, wracked with guilt, would prefer to drive (or be driven in) a smaller, more economical and outwardly less ostentatious vehicle. But one that still had all of the fixtures and well-groomed feel of their regular full-sized, status-flaunting luxury saloons.

Moreover, these hand-wringing, socially conscious high-net-worth individuals would be quite prepared to be fleeced for up to £10,000 – or more than the price of a new V12 Jaguar or Daimler at 1975 prices – for such a vehicle.

In the same way that a Radford Mini Cooper (or even a Vanden Plas Princess 1300) will always appeal to those who want leather-swaddled luxury in a small package, there was, perhaps, a certain logic here. Particularly in a United Kingdom that was suffering 24% inflation, had just given its coal miners a 35% pay rise and was taxing its wealthiest citizens (many of whom were heading for Switzerland) at up to 93%.

But while the Rio obviously didn't have the chic of the Radford (or the limo-for-the-people image of the VdP), its fatal error was a failure to take into account that the very wealthy do not have to court the approbation of a scornful public – which presupposes that your average tycoon actually cared what the scornful public thought of them anyway. And even if the 24mpg Rio would do at least 10 more miles to a 1975 (72p) gallon than an XJ12 or a 450SEL, was your average tycoon/captain of industry/bloated plutocrat really bothered about saving £10 a week on their fuel bill?

The project, based on the Triumph Dolomite, was thus misconceived during the early '70s Fuel Crisis by the normally astute Panther boss Robert Jankel and his co-director David Franks. The surprising success of the 1972 J72 and the '74 De Ville doubtless gave them the confidence to speculate that there were enough rich buyers on the lookout for something different: if nothing else, the Rio was certainly that.

But they also saw the Rio as a hedge against changing tastes; if the day came when buyers for





flamboyant, handbuilt pastiche 'nostalgia cars' dried up, it was felt that having a modern-looking car in the range could not do any harm.

There would be two versions: the 91bhp Rio was based on the standard eight-valve Dolomite 1850, the flagship 127bhp Rio Especial on the 16-valve Dolomite Sprint. Prices started at £7900 (three times the price of the humble Triumph it was based upon), rising to £8900 for the more powerful car. Options such as air-conditioning (£400) and an electric sunroof (£327) could soon bump up the invoice to the £10k mark. That was still £7000 adrift of a Silver Shadow, but with a drinks cabinet, fridge, television and leather headlining among the possible options, the final bill for a fully loaded Rio could have been comparably huge.

It was no Rolls-Royce, but the quality of the finish justified the cost to a certain extent (the Rio won a coachbuilding silver medal at Earls Court in 1975). This combined with a level of bespoke detail that included specially designed alloy wheels – shod with smaller, fatter Avon tyres – a leather-covered steering wheel, electric windows all round and Panther's trademark ashtrays with built-in lighters, one for each door. Tinted glass, reversing and boot lights, an internally adjustable door mirror, a Radiomobile stereo and inertia-reel seatbelts were all part of the standard specification.

The manual Rios all had overdrive as standard, and thus equipped the 16-valve car was good for 109mph and 0-60mph in 9.7 secs, making it 3mph slower and just over a second adrift of the standard Dolomite Sprint, which was 250lb (113kg) lighter.

Commercial expectations for the Rio were not unreasonable: it was never seen as anything more than a niche product, selling at the rate of four per month alongside six J72s and one De Ville. It was to be built in the same Byfleet factory by the 100-strong Panther workforce, which was really a collective of half a dozen groups of independent craftsmen specialising in paintwork, trim, panel-beating and glass.

Working up the shape in full-sized silhouette, using thin-gauge wire, Jankel styled the Rio to be 4½in longer than the Dolomite (most of the extra length being in the rear), with a lower roofline. Panther bought in brand-new, fully road-legal Dolomites and removed all the outer panels, including the roof. Once they were stripped down to the bulkheads, the original steel panels were replaced with hand-formed aluminium – although it was thought that machine-pressed sections would be used if demand warranted it. Tight, regular panel gaps and deep, glossy paint (that spoke of many hand-rubbed-down coats) were to the same standard as the big Jaguar-based Panthers.

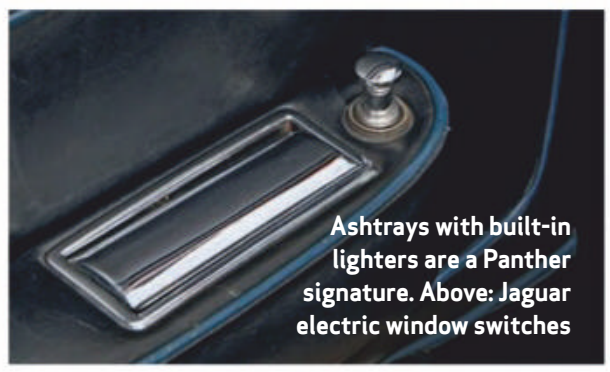
Even that was not enough to get momentum behind sales; within a year, Jankel's thoughts on the theme of a higher-production Panther had moved on to the Vauxhall-based Lima. Initial hopes for the Rio were bolstered by the promise of a 100-car order from HR Owen. When that deal didn't materialise, the car's fate was sealed.

It's hard to get an accurate sense of when the last car was produced, but Mark Harrison – who worked at Panther in the '70s – remembers a Rio being assembled as late as 1977 or '78: "It was put together by the De Ville team. I was doing inspections and testing and a blue left-hand-drive Rio came through, bound for Switzerland."



Dolomite origins can be spotted, but cabin finish is superb. Right: walnut adds luxury (stereo is a later addition)





Ashtrays with built-in lighters are a Panther signature. Above: Jaguar electric window switches



Panther cars
A SPOTTER'S GUIDE

Robert Jankel's Panther Westwinds (later Panther Cars) built some of the world's wackiest motoring creations; these are the 'production' cars – which means that more than one was made!



J72 *1972-'86, 376 built* **Jaguar-based retro roadster**



FF *1974-'75, 7 built* **The 'Felber Ferrari' hid a pukka V12**



DE VILLE *1974-'85, 60 built* **Pastiche 4dr, dhc and limo**

‘The extra sound-deadening really does its job, with noise suppressed to a level unknown in this size of car at the time’





LIMA/KALLISTA *1976-’82/ 1982-’93, 897/1437 built*
Panther’s big seller began with Vauxhall power, replaced by a Ford ‘four’ or V6 for the Kallista



SIX *1978-’79, 2 built* Twin-turbo V8 six-wheel supercar



SOLO 2 *1989-’90, c21 built* Cosworth-powered 4x4 2+2

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"I'll do 50 miles in it," says owner Peter Mayo, "but only 50, because the first time I took it 51 miles it broke down!"

For years it was believed that 38 Rios were produced but, once the penny dropped that Panther only issued every other chassis number, the final tally was established at just 18 cars. Five are thought to survive and Peter Mayo, press officer of the energetic Panther Car Club, owns two of them, as well as a De Ville, a Lima and a J72, which he freely admits is "probably the world's worst-driving '70s car". He blames his Panther obsession on playing Top Trumps as a kid: they out-trumped most things on price, engine size and, in the case of the 8.2-litre Panther Six, even number of wheels.

Mayo's black Especial automatic is thought to be the best of the surviving Rios. The second from last built, it was originally dark blue and sold new to the managing director of a firm in Leicester, who kept it until 1979. It went through various Panther Car Club members' hands until Mayo bought it in 2018. A £12,000 bid finally persuaded its owner to part with the Rio, and Mayo has since spent a further £5000 getting it resprayed and having various niggles sorted. Meanwhile he bought himself a second Rio – the third from last built, a standard 1850 in Almond – from a lady in Carlisle who was still using it as her everyday car.

The Especial is the more dependable car at present. "The Almond Rio needs a bit more sorting, while I will do 50 miles in the black one," says Mayo. "But only 50, because the first time I took it 51 miles it broke down!"

There's a certain logic in that.

On first sighting the Panther disguises its Dolomite origins quite well, although the glass area is a strong giveaway and the Ford Granada front lights are obvious once you have been told; likewise the Triumph TR6 rear lenses.

The doors shut with a substantial thump as you settle in to the well-stuffed seats, which are built on the Triumph frames but clad in fragrant Connolly leather. Their opulent bulk robs rear passengers of kneeroom that was not abundant to begin with: it's hard to imagine a tycoon sitting here surveying the *Financial Times*.

The doorcards are trimmed in leather, as are the steering-column surround and the top of the dashboard, but the general shape and instrumentation of the fascia are pure Dolomite – albeit with the familiar dials set in glossy burr walnut to match the door cappings. The pleasingly executed leather-covered centre console features Series 2 Jag XJ6 pushbutton switchgear, a deeply recessed handbrake and 420G/Daimler limousine electric-window controls. The manual choke looks very British



Leyland poverty-spec parts bin, but the remote filler-cap release is a posh 'coachbuilt' touch.

The Borg-Warner automatic transmission suits the character of the Rio, with gearchanges that are as smooth as you could reasonably wish for. The engine has strong mid-range torque and revs eagerly if not very musically. The lasting impression is that the much-touted extra sound-deadening really does its job, with engine, road and suspension noise suppressed to a level likely unknown in this size of car at the time.

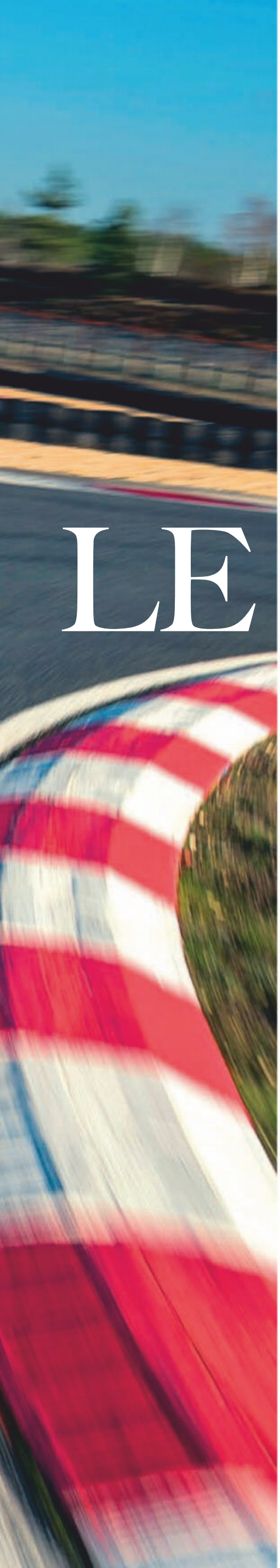
There is no power steering and the Rio doesn't need it, the pleasingly thick-rimmed bespoke wheel giving light, faithful control over the front wheels, with the bonus of a handily tight lock. Panther tweaked the camber and toe-in settings on the front suspension to give the handling a less nervous feel than the standard car; a stock Dolly Sprint remains a gap in my education, so I can't offer any comparisons, but I suspect that the Rio is a softer drive with a more substantial feel on the road.

It would be pointless to pretend that this discreetly good-looking, quietly distinguished semi-handbuilt saloon did not deserve its fate. That said, in the tiny sub-genre of 'ordinary cars tarted-up to be something they are not' (I'm thinking of the Monteverdi Sierra, mainly) it is one of the better, more memorable efforts.

Best of all, the Rio is the antithesis of its neoclassic siblings, the De Ville and J72. Those eccentric, handbuilt oddities channelled the style and spirit of the great glamour cars of the '30s, yet were very much about the freewheeling flamboyance of the 1970s, summoning up (for me at least) an anachronistic world of top-shelf glamour. Somehow, when I think of a De Ville I have a vision of a semi-clad lady 'road testing' the cocktail bar rather than any particular detail of the car itself. The Rio, in contrast, was Panther showing its sensible side: somehow, it's hard to picture a *Penthouse* or *Mayfair* centre-spread road test of a Rio sandwiched between naked vacuuming with Mary Millington and *Readers' wives*, which can only be a good thing.

PANTHER RIO

Sold/number built 1975-'76/18
Construction steel monocoque, aluminium panels **Engine** iron-block, alloy-head, sohc, 16v 1998cc slant-four, twin SU HS6 carbs
Max power 127bhp @ 5700rpm
Max torque 124lb ft @ 4500rpm
Transmission four-speed manual with overdrive or three-speed auto, RWD
Suspension: front independent, by double wishbones **rear** live axle, radius arms; coil springs, telescopic dampers, anti-roll bar f/r **Steering** rack and pinion
Brakes discs front, drums rear, with servo
Length 14ft (4267mm) **Width** 5ft 1in (1549mm) **Height** 4ft 7in (1397mm)
Wheelbase 8ft ½in (2454mm)
Weight 2800lb (1270kg) **Mpg** 24
0-60mph 9.7 secs **Top speed** 109mph
Price new £8900 **Price now** £5-20,000





LE MONSTRE OF PARIS

Unique in an already rarefied world of DBs, this Le Mans entrant was the realisation of one man's ingenuity via one willing owner

WORDS **JACK PHILLIPS** PHOTOGRAPHY **OLGUN KORDAL**

Ask a sports car racer who has contested for outright victory at Le Mans what value there is in class honours, and you will often be met with ambivalence. A race is a race, until faster cars scream past you as if you're standing still and sap your enthusiasm. Ask a wealthy amateur and they'll go wide-eyed and wax lyrical: simply to race at the great and storied track is reward enough; returning home with a class trophy in the hand luggage is the icing on the cake.

Who knows what modern professional drivers would make of the Indices of Performance and of Thermal Efficiency. The latter took priority over the former on its inception in 1960, and was a competition among the main competition. It was important, as its prize showed: the winner landed £4000 in 1961 – around £90k in today's money. Far more than mere pocket change.

Small-capacity and low-production sports cars would buzz around on their limiters as far as their frugal little engines could, sharing the track with thoroughbred monsters all day and night on a quest for that pot of gold that was almost as lucrative as the one given to the outright winners. And so at Le Mans, a Ferrari or Aston Martin would thunder down the Mulsanne with its helmsman praying that a tiny sports car didn't catch them unawares.

Among those hoping for Index wins ahead of anything else were the likes of Abarth, Osca and Deutsch et Bonnet, or DB.

The little French DB proved a dab hand at it. The company's origins lay before the First World War and in a partnership born of fate between Charles Deutsch and René Bonnet. When the former's father died he left his teenage son the family coachbuilders, which within a few years was sold to the more experienced Bonnet. A series of Citroën Traction Avant-based racers designed and built by the two engineers slowly filed out of the Champigny-sur-Marne garage, but rarely out of France, and the dial was turned up when the economy and the country began to rebuild after the occupation.

Le Mans naturally beckoned, and the marque won the Index of Performance four times between 1954 (when Bonnet shared with sometime Grand Prix racer Élie Bayol) and 1960, predominantly with the Panhard-engined HBR4/5. That spawned various offshoots including mid-engined spiders known as 'tanks'; a 'breadvan'-esque streamliner with a Kamm-style tail, nicknamed 'La Vitrine' because of its big front glasshouse; and this, 'Le Monstre'. Less famous than that big flat Cadillac one,

‘The tweaks result in a car that looks reminiscent of a homemade DB4GT Zagato, if you squint hard enough’

Swept-back front wing line and rear spats were part of a second makeover ahead of the assault on Le Mans

perhaps, but this ‘monster’ is far more slippery. And more attractive, too, though that’s a battle it would struggle to lose.

The car’s original owner, Jacques Rey, entered Le Monstre into the 1961 Le Mans with an Index victory already under its belt. Two years earlier, Rey and his engineer and in-demand hotshoe driver, André Guilhaudin, finished a fine eighth out of 111 starters on the gruelling Tour de France. Most importantly, the pair secured first in the Index of Performance for GT cars. Remarkably, Rey had purchased the car only in June, a few months before the August start of the Nice to Spa-Francorchamps epic.

It was Guilhaudin who reworked the HBR4 – the number signifying the horsepower rating of its 747cc Panhard two-stroke engine – into the slightly bizarre beast it remains today. His engineering apprenticeship had started at the age of around four, when his father took over a garage in Chambéry; he first tasted competition in 1948 and subsequently became something of a DB specialist – a ‘works’ driver, had they the money or inclination.

Guilhaudin realised it wasn’t necessarily more power that would give the HBR4 a better chance in the pursuit of Index wins, but drag efficiency. That is, after all, sort of the name of the game. Funded by Rey, coachbuilder Chalmette of Grenoble was enlisted to help Guilhaudin realise his drawings, which proposed to lower the roof by 11cm compared to the standard ‘Coach’, as the HBR4 was known. The front pillars were cut and the roof was slid downwards, creating a smoother line but a 4cm shortfall of plastic at the bootlid. That was filled, and new shorter doors were required – aluminium was used for the replacements instead of glassfibre. The rear window of the Panhard Z was swapped in to be the windscreen and its aluminium hull was carried over to bond with the plastic body.

For the assault on the Tour de France Automobile that remained enough tweaks, resulting in a car that looks – if you squint hard enough – reminiscent of a homemade Aston DB4GT Zagato in the way it rounds down to a point at the back and its nose rakes up with big, oval bug eyes.

The side-window line at the rear follows the original coachwork, leaving a hump that encroaches into a now-slender Plexiglas panel, and accentuates the pivot that was required of its nose to flatten the bonnet line and improve visibility. It worked, because looking out over the bubble bonnet the view of the track ahead is unobscured. It’s only when disembarking that you really notice just how close you and the lowered chassis have been to the floor; entering is otherwise easy, though to save weight there are no handles but just a mechanical button to free the latch. Only head on, when there is an original HBR4 standing alongside, does the cut-and-shut present itself in photos.



MAURICE LOUCHE

Index-winning Le Monstre tails HBR4 on ’59 Tour de France

The chrome bumpers remained for the Continental enduro, but, during the winter following that instant success (backed up by a class win on the Critérium des Cévennes rally), more changes were made to further improve on Guilhaudin’s vision. Off came those bumpers, bar the overhangs protecting the Peugeot 403 rear lights; the cooling channels on the front wings were closed with a rudimentary steel delete panel screwed over the top; and the front wheelarches were sculpted and swept back for better aerodynamics. Removable wheel spats made from marine plywood further improved its slipperiness, while a short, straight aluminium exhaust ran along a now-flat floor.

Its 1960 season was limited to the Rallye Monte-Carlo, failing to reach its destination from Athens, before returning to the Tour de France to claim 12th overall and fourth in class. But in 1961 it would join five other Equipe DB Panhard teammates at Le Mans.

More than six decades later the car remains as it was that June, bodywork aside. That was damaged in the early 1990s in a Paris garage filled with classic cars, when a Ferrari Daytona



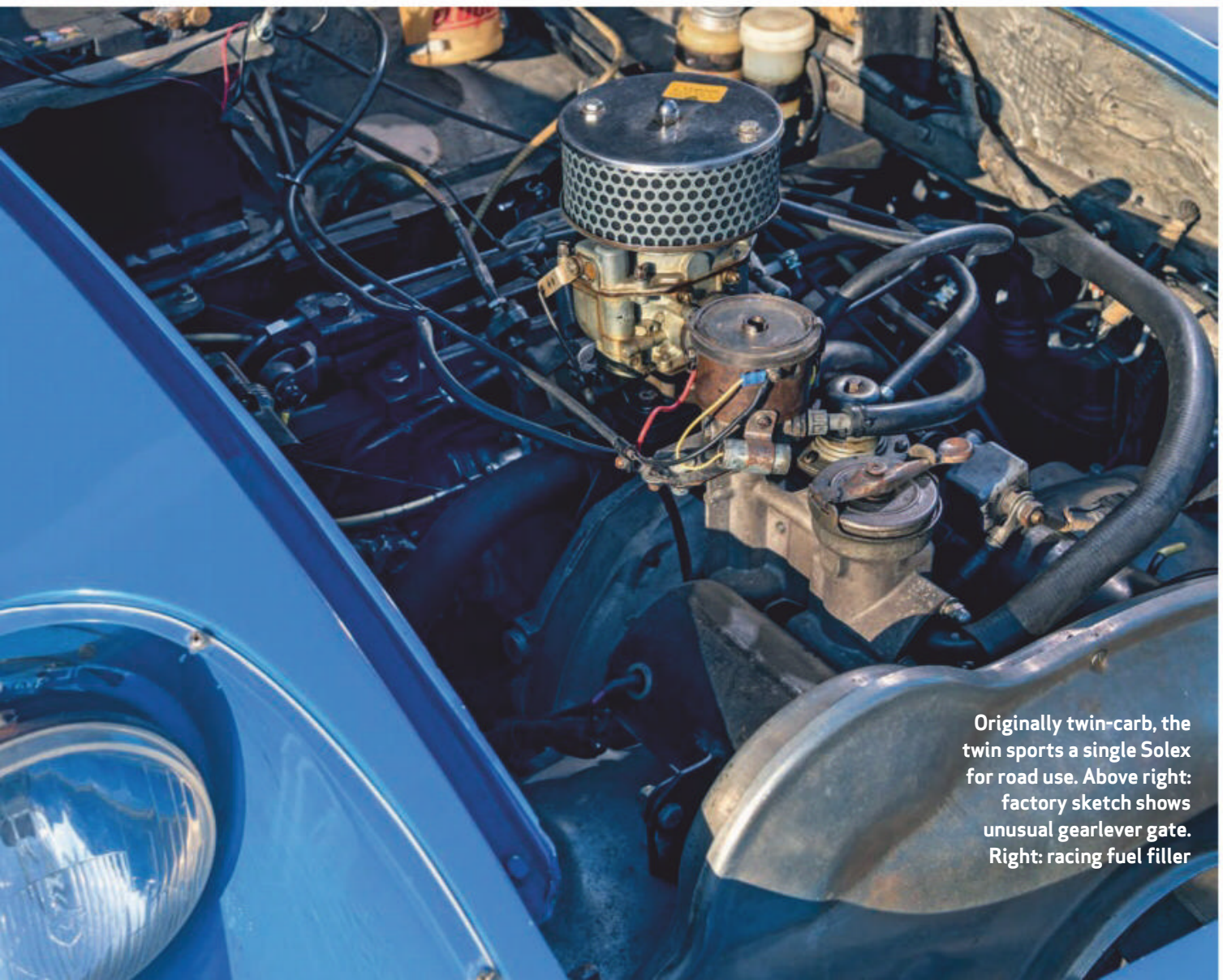


Original seat has wonderful patina, but cabin is otherwise very Spartan. Left: indicator switch mounted between the seats is from an early 2CV

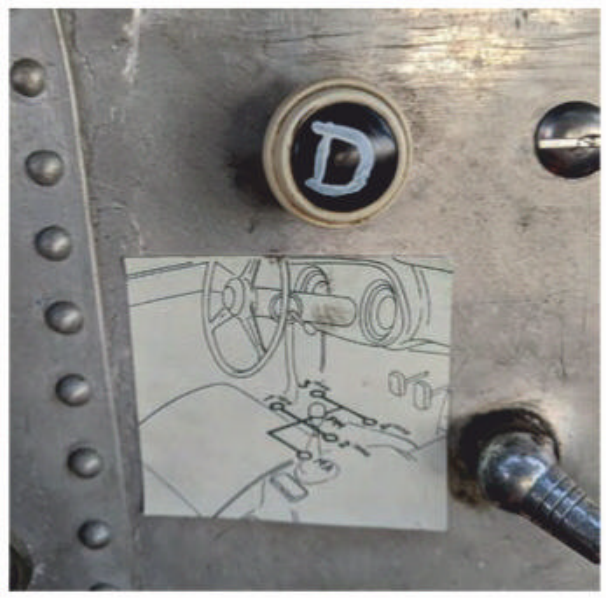


Jaeger/Guilhaudin during Le Mans '61, being chased down by the TR4 'Sabrina' of Les Leston and Rob Slotemaker

MOTORSPORT IMAGES



Originally twin-carb, the twin sports a single Solex for road use. Above right: factory sketch shows unusual gearlever gate. Right: racing fuel filler





nerfed its nose, breaking the glassfibre and crunching it backwards into a wall. Found beneath its French Blue paintwork was the large black number 48 worn at Le Mans.

Today it's running a single 38PBIC Solex carb, rather than the usual two, and the Le Mans gearing has been swapped – both changes done to create something rather more road-friendly. The barely padded and well-worn seat is the same as used by Guilhaudin and teammate Jean-François Jaeger, another DB specialist who had won the Pau 3 Hours in 1958.

Le Mans didn't go without drama, with clutch problems besetting many of the DB equipes – including a smoky pitlane scene when Rey's team attempted to liberate the plates. But his drivers persevered and were among the five of six DBs to reach the line, crossing it in formation as soon as the chequer flew. Once the formula for weight, fuel economy and speed had been calculated, Guilhaudin and Jaeger had tied for second in the Index of Thermal Efficiency with a French-entered Lotus Elite on 1.03 points, behind Peters Harper and Proctor in a Sunbeam Alpine (1.07). A 'tank' HBR4 claimed the relegated Index of Performance, but Guilhaudin's vision had been vindicated.

The race would have been a feat of endurance for the drivers and their sanity just as much as the hard-working drilled-steel 848cc motor – increased for the race and technically therefore an HBR5, with lightened flywheel. The noise is relentless inside the cockpit, the exhaust's machine-gun fire rattling and reverberating around the polyester walls and plywood door trims. Without fail, Guilhaudin would drive with the window wide open – even on the Monte – and perhaps did so for some blessed relief from the sound. Once it was open, such is the weight-saving that using the fabric pulley to raise it again would be all but impossible.

It is as buzzy as you would expect; on some exploratory laps of a small track a short drive from its Orléans home the owner taps the rev counter with some incredulity and a Gallic shrug as the needle sails past 6000rpm. It does so without straining, or showing any hint of it.

These laps are important, apparently, because the DB gearbox requires time to acclimatise. To engage first gear, depress the light clutch and steer the short lever towards your right leg. Second is straight across the naked transmission tunnel rather than up, with third up in front of first. But instead of being mind-scrambling it's almost intuitive, soon becoming natural to slip between the ratios. Still, there's a diagram from the factory on the bare aluminium dash beside the Jaeger dials, should you get in a muddle.

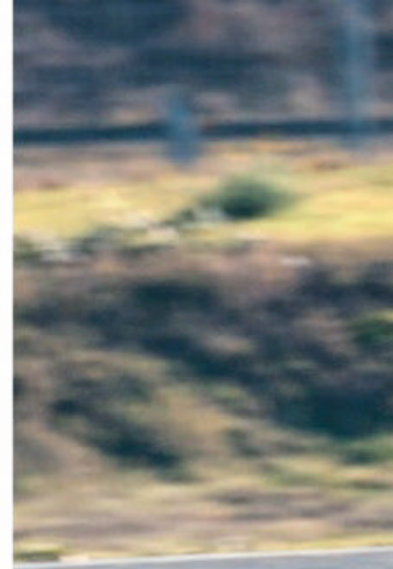
The wooden wheel is large and the skinny tyres dutifully do as it directs, the car leaning through bends with the rear gripping gamely. It's a consuming and engaging experience, one that would quickly be about rhythm and maintaining momentum. The long stints at the 24 Hours must have been a riot – though the Mulsanne would have felt longer and louder than ever.

The DB's current owner, Roland Roy, is more used to his cars gobbling Les Hunaudières with a bit more ease and lots more sonic delight. He was a key figure in local marque Matra during its rise to racing prominence in the 1960s, working in its competitions department running the team of people creating the fabulous bodywork.

He and 'Le Monstre' were seemingly meant to be. "It's a small world," he says via Antoine Mahe from Artcurial, which will auction Le Monstre at Rétromobile in Paris in February. "The Matra-Djet Club president received a call from a mechanic in France telling him to come and look at this special DB because he didn't know what it was. I went, too, and recognised it straight away. The last time I had seen it was in 1973 at Le Mans for the 50th anniversary of the 24 Hours; Guilhaudin and Rey were with it.

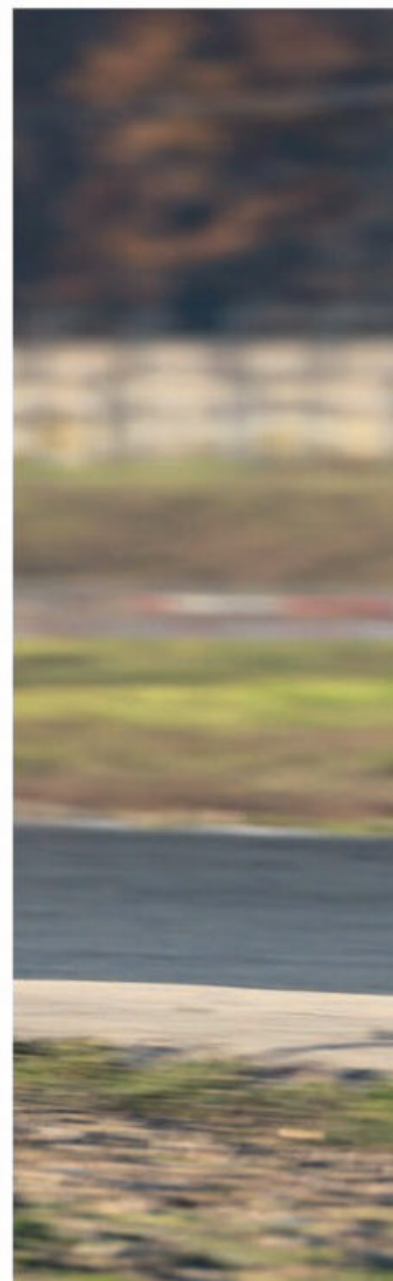
"I was there working for Matra, the year of the battle with Ferrari. I was in charge of the pit signals, and at the end of the race we prepared a sign with a horse flagging on it, and a cockerel showing the middle finger!"

Because of that unfortunate Daytona-inflicted damage, a good deal was struck with the previous owner, who had bought Le Monstre from Rey but left it unused and untouched ever since. Roy towed the car home on a flatbed trailer behind a modest Fiat Tipo, and a year or so of



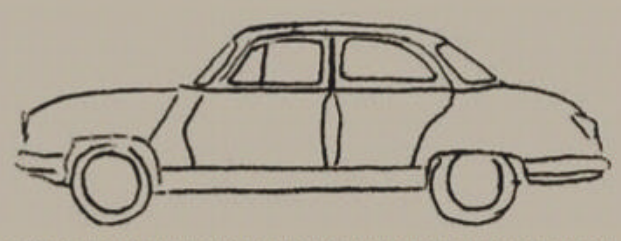
Skinny tyres and light weight result in sweet steering, while front-drive gives good traction. Below: Le Monstre pits behind sister DB 'La Vitrine'



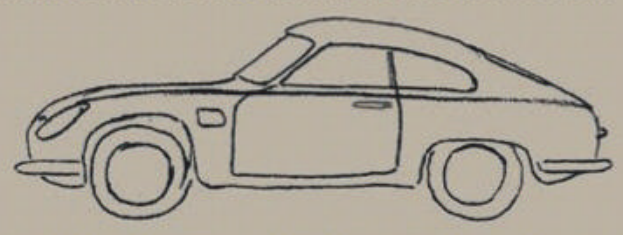


THE MAKING OF A MONSTRE

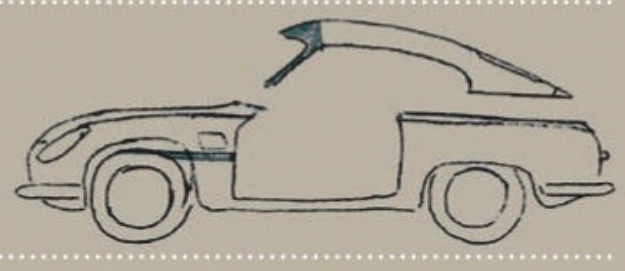
Owner Roland Roy's previous life in the Matra bodywork department allowed him to recreate the car's glassfibre body, but here his casual sketches also outline André Guilhardin's plans:



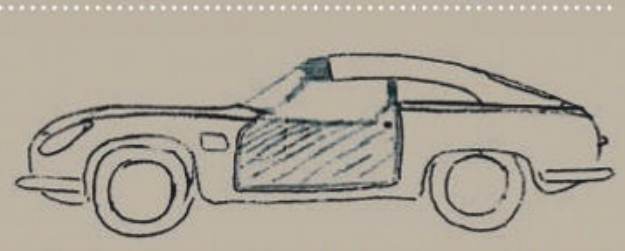
The Panhard Dyna Z provided the DB HBR4's running gear, including its two-stroke engine, and tubular subframes



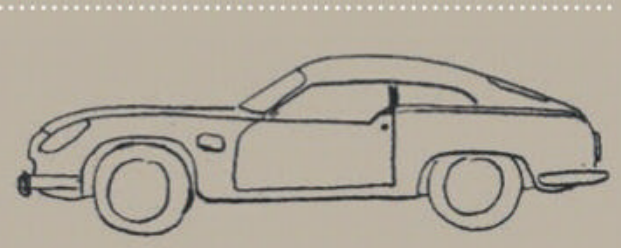
The standard HBR4 coupé featured a glassfibre body, unlike the all-aluminium Dyna Z and the first HBR4 prototype



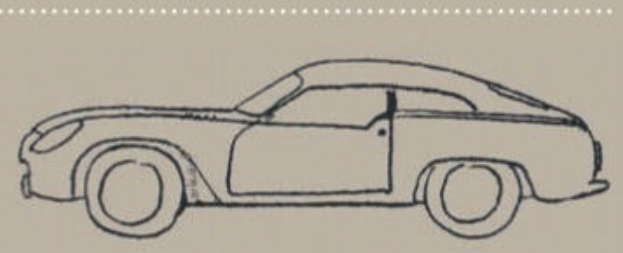
The pillars were cut and the roof slid down; a Dyna Z rear window, complete with frame, was installed in place of the front 'screen



The original HBR5 doors proved too tall, so replacement aluminium items were produced with sparse plywood door inserts



Initial designs for Le Monstre were completed in time for the 1959 Tour de France Automobile, without spats



By 1960 the wheelarches were trimmed back, spats created from wood and cooling ducts closed for better efficiency





MOTORSPORT IMAGES

long nights and no holidays later his work was complete. His experience from the Matra bodyshop was no doubt invaluable, his drawings detailed like few could manage.

A fellow club member's car was used to form the moulds to replace the broken front and rear sections, but the rest of Le Monstre was largely in working order and it was soon back racing. Including at Le Mans, in the Journée Bleues event on the Bugatti Circuit.

Roy discovered that the ever-inventive Guilhaudin had rigged the brake lights to illuminate only when the rear pads closed rather than the fronts, which engaged first – the all-important little gains in the mind games. The engine bay also houses two electrical regulators, so if one failed the second could be plugged straight in and the car would be back on its way.

It's a car of curiosities that encapsulates – and still carries – the spirit of France's greatest race, a preserved window into the world of economy motorsport. This isn't about outright pace but ingenuity, about a love and desire to go racing and a will for the little guy to win. Usually a preserve of the British, not the French.

It is also a player in the final chapter of DB, because Deutsch and Bonnet acrimoniously went their separate ways the same year as Le Monstre's Le Mans. CD was born in a similar vein to DB, carrying creator Charles' initials, while Bonnet teamed with Renault to unleash the Djet and later sold out to Matra, where Roy would soon be learning his craft.

Truly, a small world.

Thanks to *Sologne Karting (sologne-karting.com); Artcurial (www.artcurial.com). Le Monstre will be sold at Rétromobile on 7 February*



Body mods are most obvious from the rear; finned alloy drums protrude through the centre of the steel wheels











Clockwise, from main: Citroën DS and 2CV; 1913 Star 12HP; 1927 Dennis fire engine from Johannesburg; 1930 5mph dodgem car; 1935 Singer 9HP Le Mans in Special Speed spec, with twin SUs, was part of the Ruddy Trials Team

MOUNTAINS OF MOTORS

Nestled among picturesque scenery is the perfect automotive respite from the Lake District's many rainy days, and a tribute to one of Britain's fastest and most daring families

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY **PAUL BUSSEY**

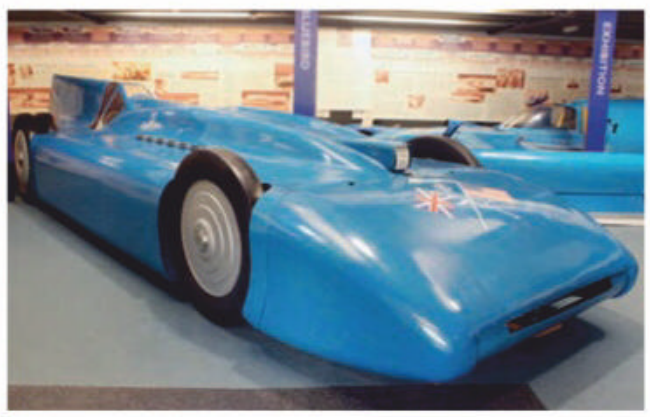
The Lakeland Motor Museum was originally founded at Holker Hall in 1978, but it moved to its current home at the nearby Old Blue Mill in Backbarrow, Cumbria, in May 2009. Not only does the museum feature a fascinating variety of more than 140 vehicles, but it also has one of the largest collections of motoring memorabilia on display in the UK, including an amazing 270 pedal cars.

Many of the exhibits are displayed with period shop frontages in the background, part of the 'Memory Lane' feature that references the Leven Valley's industrial history. There is also a faithful recreation of a country garage, which is based on the former Leck's Garage (Backbarrow) Ltd that was operated by George and Kathleen Newby. It closed in the early 1980s as a result of the village bypass.

"Around half of the cars and motorcycles and almost all of the other items are owned by the museum," explains operations manager Chris Lowe. "This allows us some cycling of exhibits. We are constantly trying to change, improve and add more without having it overly crammed."

Vehicles on display begin with a French-built 1899 Gaillardet tricycle, powered by an 800cc single-cylinder engine, and include something from every decade after that. TVR enthusiasts will revel in viewing Trevor Wilkinson's TVR Number 2, the marque's oldest survivor, which was originally used for competition before being registered for the road in 1952.

Housed in a separate building is the Campbell Bluebird Exhibition, which has moved around the Lake District for the past 25 years. Full-size replicas of the 1935 Blue Bird car, 1939 Blue Bird K4 boat and the 1967 K7 jet hydroplane built specially for the BBC film *Across the Lake* pay homage to the family's various Land and Water Speed Record attempts. There's also the 1997 Bluebird Electric 1, driven by Sir Malcolm Campbell's grandson, Don Wales, to a British record of 137mph in 2000. It is accompanied by period film footage detailing the record attempts, plus Donald Campbell's 1954 Land-Rover Series One 86in and 1937 4¼-litre Bentley with Standard Steel Park Ward bodywork, both finished in Bluebird Blue.





The Campbell Bluebird Exhibition has its own building as a tribute to Sir Malcolm and Donald Campbell, with replicas of the 1935 Blue Bird (top) and 1967 Bluebird K7 jet hydroplane (above)

Rare microcars include a 1964 Peel P50, '65 Peel Trident and '59 Mk1 Scootacar, while relatively new to the museum is a '37 Jaguar SS100. *The Motor* and *The Autocar* tested this example when it was new, and by contesting the 1937 RAC Rally it helped Jaguar win the manufacturers' team prize. Another Jaguar of note is a 1955 XK140 fhc with extensive rallying history in the hands of GHF 'Bobby' Parkes.

Among the other highlights is a 1921 Citroën Type A 10CV, complete with wooden pick-up bodywork and side-facing seats, and a '29 Fiat 509A two-door, four-seater saloon. Built at the Lingotto factory, the car has remained in the same ownership for more than 40 years. Some of the more unusual exhibits include a 1930s dodgem car that was once used on a concrete race track at a fairground in New Brighton, Merseyside, and an electric-powered Auto Red Bug buckboard cyclecar built in 1920s America.

There's even a 1966 Amphicar and glassfibre '56 Vincent Amanda water scooter, powered by a 200cc twin-cylinder engine. The Amanda was found on the Isle of Man and the rare survivor was restored by one of the museum's directors.

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Another recent addition is the 1963 Humber Hawk Estate Series III that has covered only 45,000 miles from new, and lived a life towing caravans and making deliveries for its owner's hardware business. It was stored in a heated and sealed garage in North Yorkshire and wrapped in blankets, which have ensured it remains in excellent original condition.

"A visit here is very much an experience for the whole family," claims Lowe. "We have something to appeal to everyone, no matter what your particular field of interest. There's plenty to keep youngsters happy, too, with a children's quiz and interactive exhibits such as period driving-test skills and slot machines that were rescued from Blackpool amusement arcades in the 1950s and '60s by the museum's founder, Donald Sidebottom. We also have an Isle of Man TT section, with many 'bikes that once raced there, plus a fine selection of push-bikes, motorcycles and scooters, the earliest being a Grigg and an ABC Skootamota from the '20s."

The exhibits are well laid out, roughly in order of date of manufacture, with the main exhibition hall filled with natural light. Underfloor heating ensures that the museum remains warm in the winter months.

Mannequins dressed as police officers, Women's Land Army members and other military personnel add further authenticity to the exhibits. The focus on the services extends to the cars, too, such as a police-spec 1960 MGA that was one of approximately 50 supplied for traffic patrol use. The museum's example served with the Lancashire Constabulary and retains its blue light and bumper-mounted siren.

"The museum is a popular rendezvous for classic car clubs, and the patio doors open to spectacular views across the River Leven"

Clockwise from below: Series One owned by Donald Campbell until his death in 1967; Austin A35 with endearing roof-rack; eclectic collection lines up roughly in date order as it snakes around the small venue; important TVR Number 2 stars



Each exhibit has an informative A4 board, handily recording details of the model along with the car's individual history where known.

"Visiting the museum by road, sail or rail couldn't be easier," enthuses Lowe. "We offer combined tickets with Windermere Lake Cruises and the Lakeside and Haverthwaite Steam Railway, with a bus link available during the main season. We are a popular rendezvous for classic car clubs, who meet here on a regular basis, and there's plenty of space for parking, while the café's patio doors open on to spectacular views across the River Leven."

Home to some intriguing exhibits with great attention to detail, this celebration of motoring in the Lakes is well worth a visit.

THE KNOWLEDGE

Name Lakeland Motor Museum
Address Old Blue Mill, Backbarrow, Newby Bridge, Ulverston, Cumbria LA12 8TA
Where? Exit the M6 at J36 on to the A590 and follow the brown tourism signs. From Windermere, take the A592 to the A590
How much? Adults £9, or £8.10 when booked in advance online; children from 5-15 years £5.40/£4.90, under 5s free; families (two adults and up to three children) £26/£23.40
Opening hours 9:30am-5:30pm (4:30pm after 31 October) daily, except 25 December
Tel 01539 530400
Web www.lakelandmotormuseum.co.uk

HOBBY HEARSES

Coachbuilt specials to be seen dead in from Austin, Ford, Chevrolet and Rolls-Royce

WORDS **ANDREW ROBERTS** PHOTOGRAPHY **JAMES MANN**







Clockwise from main: hearse was built from an early estate; seats are fixed; tail tweaks included raised lights; deck means space is at a premium



The motorised hearse was first encountered on the streets of London in 1906, five years after residents of Coventry witnessed a modified Daimler transport a coffin – a first in the UK. And, as with anything built for a specific purpose, a preserved example is a window into the past. A funeral director might, for example, commission a vehicle with a removable rear deck so that it could be converted into passenger transport, or an elaborate 'bearer hearse' with room for the conductor and four bearers.

Many a retired Daimler or Austin hearse conversion met their fate on the banger-racing circuit, that strange pastime akin to a 1960s B-movie horror film. But, fortunately, the Classic Hearse Register was formed in 1993 to cater for survivors produced before 1980. Dean Reader and Sandra Mitchell have been running the club since 2003, and they now own one of the largest – if not *the* largest – private collections of hearses in the UK. They have also written several books on the subject.

All of which prompted *C&SC* to gather five prime examples of the hearse-builder's art at the National Motor Museum in Hampshire.

The Ford Consul Cortina MkI, the Consul GT and the Chevrolet Caprice are all part of Reader and Mitchell's 15-strong collection. The Cortina is based on a 1963 De Luxe estate and was formerly the property of Murphy's Undertakers of Macroom, near Cork in Ireland. "It was ordered before the estate cars went on sale," Reader explains, "and is representative of a typical Irish conversion."

The new coachwork was by Paddy Nagel, who operated a local bodyshop. The tailgate was modified, the back doors welded shut and a new roof and side windows were created for the foot-long rear extension. The rear lights were also moved higher. "They did a good job of retaining body curves and bumper humps," says Reader.

The Cortina is not unpleasing, aesthetically, even if there were inevitable consequences from using the first-generation model as the basis for a hearse. It might have been more logical for Murphy's to have specified the optional column-mounted gearlever, for to accommodate a coffin the front seats are fitted well forward, which means the steering wheel is close. "Dean's back kills him when he gets out," admits Mitchell.

The performance is best described as limited. "It is wallowy and, being a 1200cc version, it is gutless if you hit a hill," Mitchell explains.

They came by the Cortina some three years ago – the last tax disc was from 1983 – but it is unclear as to when it was last employed as a hearse. As Mitchell points out, Irish funeral directors would often run vehicles for decades: "We have seen 1940s hearses being used in the '70s and even the '80s – more so in rural areas."



Consul's roof is noticeably raised. Right, from top: club custodians Dean Reader and Sandra Mitchell; cabin also fits three attendants







Claims of being 'just like the *Ghostbusters* car' sit best with the Chevrolet. Clockwise from right: rare roof urns; typical bench seat; double deck







'A 1986 Chevrolet Caprice hearse with illuminated urns on the roof causes a sensation in the New Forest'

The restoration of such a rare vehicle inevitably brought myriad challenges, but the mechanical parts were simple enough to find through the Classic Hearse Register.

The Cortina had been welded beneath, but the biggest obstacle was replicating some of the elements from the original build. That meant they had to think more creatively. "Hearses like ours were bodged with bits of metal, wood and whatever else thrown in then hidden by filler and paint," says Reader. "The current deck is made from floorboards, and it takes two to remove it."

A further issue was that the roof would have caved in if the side glass had been taken out. So the logical solution was to make do and mend, or tidy what they could to finish the project.

The next member of their group is based on a 1974 Ford Consul GT, which at that time was the most cost-effective method of obtaining the Essex V6 unit for many limousine or hearse builders. The coachwork is by Coleman Milne, which was established by John Coleman and Roderick Milne in 1953 in Lancashire and became Dagenham's supplier of choice for hearses 17 years later. It's a link that remains to this day, alongside modern Mercedes.

A car such as GEB 354N would typically have been acquired by a funeral director as a Zodiac MkIV replacement. Coleman Milne offered three different wheelbases and two roof heights based on the MkI Granada; this Consul is a prime example of the firm's flagship hearse, with space for a driver and three attendants. When the donor cars arrived at the workshop, first the bodywork was reduced to a chassis cab. The chassis itself was then lengthened into LWB format. A metal framework would be installed to accommodate a complete one-piece glassfibre body that retained the looks of the original, but with a highline roof and a double deck.

On the road, the Consul is smooth and effortless thanks to the automatic transmission and that famed V6 engine. Speed and handling are also good, with uprated springs that were made specially by Coleman Milne. Some hearses were even fitted with air suspension.

The Consul has been a part of the Reader and Mitchell fleet for the past five years. "Sadly, we have no idea who the original funeral director was," Reader says. "We bought it from a club member who had always promised it to us – he has four other hearses that will be ours at some

Austin A60 Cambridge carries the hearse design with more ease – and can even be coaxed close to the national speed limit







Clockwise from main: deck has held up well; spacious interior; long rear overhang affects handling; owner Byrom



point. It is original in general, although there are signs of some repaired accident damage near the front of the car. When money allows, it will be getting a proper respray."

To look through the windscreen is to believe you are in a standard GT. That illusion is immediately dispelled when you look in the mirror, as Mitchell notes: "You see that height, length and the coffin deck at your shoulder."

The final member of their trio teaches us a valuable lesson: a 1986 Chevy Caprice Classic hearse with four illuminated urns on the roof will cause a minor sensation in the New Forest. It seems more at home in a Martin Scorsese film than Hampshire, though the hearse originally hails from Belgium. It was imported into the UK in 2003, and is the only genuine Caprice hearse in the country. It joined their collection in 2016, via a club member who wanted it to remain a hearse rather than be returned to an estate.

Reader is the principal driver of the Caprice, and now wishes he had bought a Detroit car years ago, praising the Chevy's V8 engine and finger-light steering. But the dimensions are a challenge: "We wouldn't want anything wider!"

One of the more bizarre reactions to the Caprice comes when a young driver in a Japanese car attempts to race the 33-year old hearse…

The front bench seat, as well as being supremely comfortable, also affords the rare opportunity to experience the Chevrolet *au naturelle*, without the optional extras of central locking and electric windows.

Its history is still being researched by the couple. "The majority of hearses in Belgium were built by Van Dun and other coachbuilders," explains Reader, "but in later years they were mostly estate-car conversions. Various firms supplied all the ornamental additions."

In contrast, an Austin A60 Cambridge hearse is a vehicle of understated formality – albeit one with equal power to turn heads. The bodywork is by Woodall Nicholson, a concern long associated with converted BMC and BLMC products based on Austin taxis, 1½-litre Farinas, the 'Landcrab' and even the 'wedge' Princess. And as owner Roger Byrom of RPB Funerals says: "It's not something you see much in Devon, a classic hearse driving along."

YUL 241 is believed to be one of just two A60 hearses in the country and Byrom came by it in January 2012, when it was off the road. He found the restoration quite easy because parts are so readily available for the standard car. Fortunately, the hearse conversion elements did not need any replacement components, but Byrom did remove the side glass. "We had to be very careful because this was a made-to-measure item," he recalls. "We didn't want to break that."

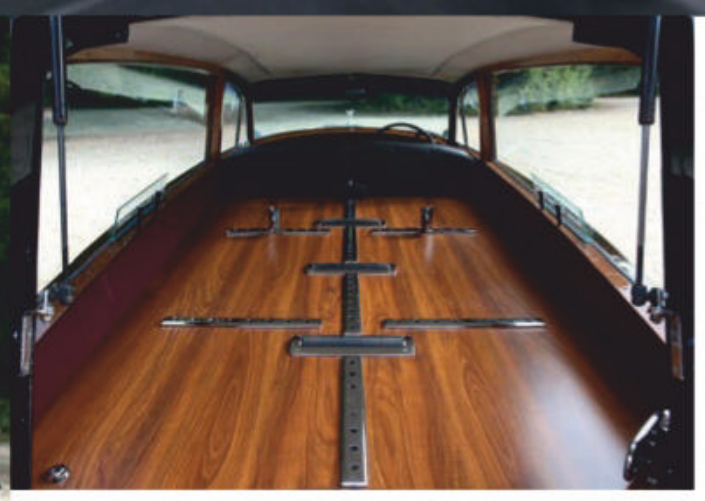
The dignity of the Woodall Nicholson coachwork is accentuated by the fact that Byrom's Austin is based on one of the last A60 Cambridges; it conveys an air of 1959 rather than 1969. "It drives well," he says, "and you can even get it wound up to 60mph, which is a more than sufficient speed for a vehicle of this type."



‘This is a coachbuilt Silver Cloud on a par with any drophead made by HJ Mulliner; every detail is perfect’

Clockwise, from main: refined interior; Cloud remains in use today; Jonathan Terry, whose funeral director is in its 20th year; black-over-claret paint







Byrom has upgraded the rear leaf springs: “It didn’t handle corners very well and it really rolled around. But that was inevitable, given the overhang on the back from the extension. The gears are smooth and, being an automatic, it changes up and down effortlessly.”

YUL 241 has appeared in *The Crown* and is soon to feature in *The Trial of Christine Keeler*: “I often take it to shows, and lots of people say, ‘Wow, I remember my dad having an A60.’ I always get people looking when we drive it.”

There is a regal magnificence to the 1958 Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud hearse conversion. It belongs to Jonathan Terry from Southampton, and to say the detailing is attractive is like saying Tower Bridge is rather handsome.

Terry believes the coachwork is by Wilcox Limousines, which was founded in 1948 and is probably best known for its work on the Daimler DS420 – an example of which he also owns. The Rolls-Royce joined his collection, which includes a Phantom VI limousine, in 2015, and full restoration work was carried out in-house at Terry’s firm of funeral directors.

The Silver Cloud is the car that prompts the greatest reaction from members of the public on our shoot, yet many seem wary of approaching. According to the assembled funeral directors, this is not uncommon.

Yet, had any passer-by ventured closer, they would have encountered a coachbuilt Silver Cloud on a par with any drophead from HJ Mulliner. Every detail is perfectly honed, from the rear deck to the roofline, the tailgate to the glasswork. The first owner didn’t specify power-operated windows, but quality is not evaluated in terms of mere accessories. It lies in the integrity of the design, the engineering and the bodywork.

“It goes really well,” says Terry. “It’s lovely, each drive is different with its own noises and creaks.” The Cloud glides through Beaulieu, and on the lanes of the New Forest you feel insulated from the cares of life. In 1964, *Sporting Motorist* wrote that the Silver Cloud was: ‘A car which sets out to do a job and does it to near perfection.’ This remains the case in the hearse.

These are all very much working vehicles: the Mitchell and Reader-owned cars are now part of their New Forest Hearse Hire, and the Austin and Rolls-Royce are both essential parts of their respective fleets. The group also charts the rise in monocoque conversions with the post-war decline in chassis-built donor cars, and changes in practices and traditions. As Byrom observes: “Fewer hearses now carry elaborate flower arrangements on their roofs.”

The last word must go to Mitchell: “The reaction to the collection is usually very positive. Many people are interested to actually see one and even the inner workings, such as the decks.

“One standard remark, heard by virtually all classic hearse owners, is: ‘It’s like the *Ghostbusters* car.’ And we are talking any of them – even the Cortina! There are also the usual snide comments from a few, but they still have to come over and take a look.” At which point their views no doubt change, upon witnessing the height of the coachbuilder’s art.

Thanks to *the National Motor Museum (beaulieu.co.uk); Dean Reader and Sandra Mitchell (classichearseregister.co.uk); Jonathan Terry Funeral Directors (jonathanterry.co.uk); RPB Funerals (rpbfunerals.com)*

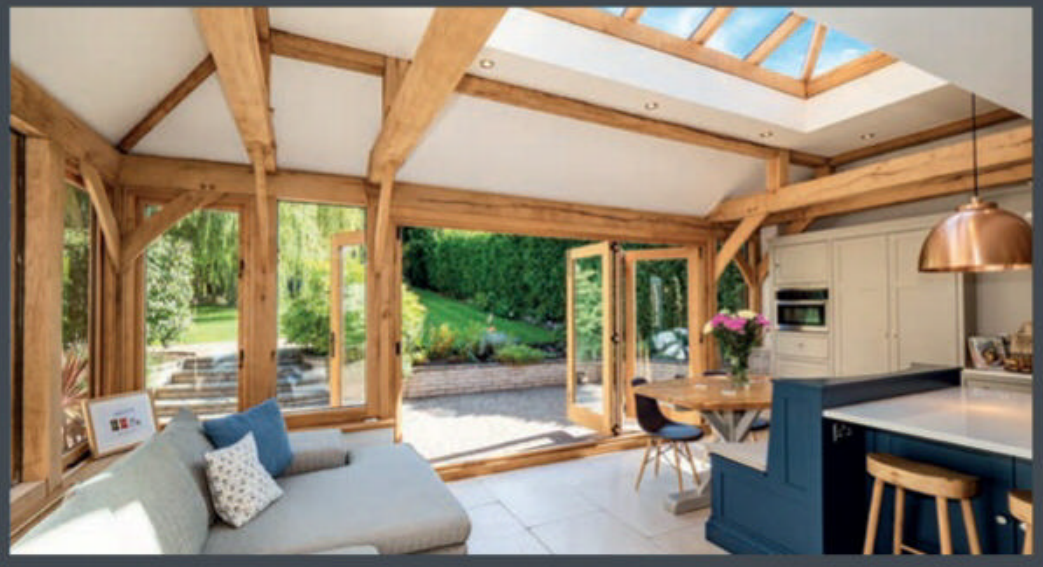




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The famous Buckley Shed, fresh from a facelift, has changed much since the Gamma's previous residence

'I thought my Gamma days were over, but escape seems impossible: the moment I think I'm "cured", something else pops up'

BUCKLEY GETS BACK IN THE GAMMA



LANCIA GAMMA BERLINA

RUN BY Martin Buckley
OWNED SINCE May 2019

Editor Clements gets nervous when I acquire another car. Why? Because, if it's only going to get an outing or two in these pages before said car departs, he is understandably reluctant to fork out for the caricature. Hence his first question is: "Are you keeping it?"

Chances are I will keep this Gamma, but even if I don't he's already got the artwork on the shelf because this is my second time around with this particular one.

To be honest I thought my Gamma days were over, but escape seems impossible: the moment I think I'm 'cured', something else pops up. However, one thing I had established, after decades of owning these cars, is that I'm probably only in the market for a Berlina – and even then only the carburettor-engined Series 1. And it has to have a leather interior.

But even having narrowed down the parameters that far, yet another one has found me in the shape of the maroon S1 Berlina I originally owned four or five years ago.

If you recall, I agreed to sell it back to Gamma/Beta fanatic Andy Collins (having secured the gold S1 that lunched its engine on the M4). From there it became embroiled in various swaps before ending up in the workshops of Pale Classics in Chippenham, where it was stripped of all its glass and brightwork in preparation for a repaint.

However, momentum was lost and the stripped-down Gamma was eventually offered back by Dan Lingham, its then custodian, in a deal against my wife's Merc 320SL that, weirdly, we bought from him!



Right-hooker is originally from Belgium

That never quite happened but I ended up being gifted the Gamma anyway, which was incredibly generous of Dan. I then persuaded Paul Lewis at Pale Classics to put it back together for me, which he did in surprisingly short order – but he felt it deserved to have its paintwork tackled. It probably does, but I can't justify it at the moment and much of the original finish is still sound so it seems a shame not to keep it that way. The only flaw in this plan was that the door glass had gone missing, but Andy Collins supplied me with a set from his parts car.





From top: tidy dash; big Weber dominates

The worst bits are the bonnet and the paint above the 'screen, but generally it's very presentable, still with the set of new tyres and refinished wheels I put on it in 2014.

The electrics are a bit sketchy and the power windows have stopped working, which is odd. I also have to reattach the chrome sill-trims and see if the Gamma Consortium can find me another driver's seat. Meanwhile, I will see if Gus Meyer can give it a once-over before I take it for an MoT test.

I'm actually really pleased to have this car back because it never gave me any huge problems and it has a particularly strong, quiet engine (for a Gamma). It's a 1977 example sold new in Belgium, its right-handedness seemingly a hangover from the days when people thought a real Lancia had to be right-hand drive: they all came that way until the mid-'50s, even though Italians drove on the right.

It's also the only Lancia I officially own at the moment, although there is a vague plan to have an Appia, Flavia and Flaminia saloon; you know where to find me if there are any free examples up for grabs.

THANKS TO
- Dan Lingham, Andy Collins and Paul Lewis (www.paleclassics.co.uk)

In association with witham Motorsport MOTUL OFFICIAL UK DISTRIBUTOR AUTOMOTIVE LUBRICANTS



The brace of Ford Galaxies – coupe and station wagon – make their collective presence felt at Balme's garage



FORD GALAXIE 500

RUN BY Julian Balme
OWNED SINCE May 1988
PREVIOUS REPORT March 2018

Where the Galaxie really comes into its own is when hitting the road with a full load of passengers, an event that just doesn't happen enough these days, though a trip to the Goodwood Revival with Messrs Walsh and ex-*C&SC* art man John Blundell went some way to evoking those journeys. Bowling across the Downs in the comfort of what felt like an exclusive members' club, conversation was uninterrupted by noisy exhausts or wind-induced rattles, and the trouble-free outing ended all too quickly.

The only problem I had with the car all year was on my way to the Cranleigh Classic Car Show in Surrey back in the summer. I stopped for fuel, a fairly regular occurrence with this car, and on trying to fire it up again there were disturbing noises from the super-duper aftermarket starter motor I invested in last year, and a distinct lack of go. Having pushed it away from the pump and into a corner of the forecourt I proceeded to crawl under the car in my white jeans.

I was able to determine that the starter was loose, and expecting the worst assumed it had shaken itself apart. Being smarter than the average bear, the one spare part I carry in the car is a starter motor – shame I hadn't packed any tools…

Thankfully a chap called Mick from across the road pulled up in his work van, looked at my now-grey jeans and offered me some spanners and a jack: "Just drop 'em back by my front door." What a star. Within minutes I'd extracted the shiny but useless starter and begun to get the reconditioned 1960s factory item ready. For some reason it didn't have a nut for the power feed, but surely I could have used the one from the newer model, I surmised.

Not with my luck. The thread was different, so I spent the following five minutes studying the car to find a suitable replacement. The fan guard, held by two half-inch nuts and bolts, would eventually donate the required hardware and within a further 10 minutes I was dropping back Mick's tools.



Shroud turned donor to get the car moving

The wagon, despite being on the transfer list, clocked up plenty of miles and continued to make itself ridiculously useful throughout the year, my half-hearted attempt to sell it amounting to nothing. I did take it to the Spring Autojumble at Beaulieu, along with a garage-load of rubbish to flog, where I made a slightly more than apathethic attempt to move it on by emblazoning a 'For Sale' sign across the side windows. If I got a quid for every "how much?", I wouldn't need to sell it, (£22,500 if you're wondering), but they all baulked at its size, claiming it wouldn't fit on their driveways. Imagine having to find room for two…



Beaulieu Autojumble clears garage space but not the wagon from south London

AND IN OTHER NEWS...



FORD MUSTANG GT

With the welding finally completed, the dash wiring is getting some much-needed attention and the knackered heater blower motor has been replaced. Thankfully, Mustang Maniac has everything. Next stop is the paint shop in two sessions, firstly for the interior and then the body. **JM**

LAND-ROVER SERIES II



After being on display at the Classic Motor Show, the Series II had a good run back until a spot of over-exertion five miles from home resulted in a loss of power and spitting back through the carb. Nursed home, urgent investigations ensued to diagnose. Is it finally time for an engine rebuild? **MP**

VOLKSWAGEN TYPE 3



After weeks of chasing rot I got busy on freeing the seized tie-rod assembly and replacing the balljoints. It all came apart after much applied heat, liberal penetrating fluid, and Anglo-Saxon. Tie rods cleaned and painted, balljoints fitted, I can now adjust my steering angles once again. **DC**



LAMBORGHINI ISLERO

I've picked up the car from Colin Clarke's, and what a difference! The drive back was a dream – it even brakes straight(ish) thanks to a rebuilt front caliper. Other work included a full service and new window mechanism, plus replacement electric window and headlight switches. **DM**

In association with witham Motorsport MOTUL OFFICIAL UK DISTRIBUTOR AUTOMOTIVE LUBRICANTS



Healey tackles the Oily Rag Run and, inset, the book that started it all for Hurst, *Cars to Remember*

MIKE MONK





AUSTIN-HEALEY 100/6

RUN BY Graeme Hurst
OWNED SINCE 1979
PREVIOUS REPORT May 2016

Last year marked four decades of Healey ownership for our family, and the milestone made me realise how much of a fixture our 100/6 has been in my upbringing since my late dad, Peter, acquired it as an unfinished restoration for R2650 in 1979. That's only around £150 in today's money, but back then (with a stronger Rand) it was around £1300 – and more than an average managerial monthly salary!

I can still recall the visit we made as a family to see the Big Healey *en route* to the flying club one Saturday morning, with Dad having to offer an extra R150 to secure the car because he had only intended to "have a look" and not brought his chequebook. The anniversary was made more poignant after I recently unearthed our family copy of *Cars to Remember*, the book in which I first set eyes on a Healey when I'd leafed through it one afternoon aged 10. That was after Dad directed me to it when I asked him what his dream car was while on the way to school. To be honest, when I heard the word "Austin" I wasn't too inspired and pictured something with four doors, not the gorgeous lines of the burgundy 100/6 that graced a full spread.

Fast-forward all those years and the Healey is still going strong, although its condition is now somewhat patinated – which leaves it at odds with the typical state of the rest of the cars in our branch of the Austin-Healey Club of Southern Africa. But that makes it a great contender for Cape Town's annual Oily Rag Run, a concours and 120km tour for 'patinated' classics. Strictly speaking the event is only for original cars with limited levels of restoration, but there is a spectator category to accommodate cars restored far back enough to now look the part. And that's what the Healey was in for the event's third running in October last year, starting in Cape Town and ending at Franschhoek Motor Museum.

The drive home afterwards gave me an opportunity to do something else to celebrate the 100/6's origins, when I realised that our planned route would take us close to the site of the original Austin factory in Blackheath. More than 360 Big Healeys were assembled here from CKD (completely knocked down) kits between 1957 and '63. As an early Longbridge car, ours drove out of the gates in the first 12 months; 61 years later the entrance is still there, but the factory buildings have long since been converted into an industrial park.

I was tempted to capitalise on the pilgrimage by heading for nearby Sir Lowry's Pass. That's where all SA-built Healeys were road tested (something no other BMC model from Blackheath can boast about), but the sweltering summer heat already had the needle of the temperature gauge heading into the red and I could foresee a 920m summit ending in a spectacular cloud of steam.

The return to the factory site – no doubt the car's first since it was screwed together all those years ago – inspired me to attempt to dig up more of its history and to apply for a Heritage Certificate from the British Motor Industry Heritage Trust. Some local Healey owners have found these to be a bit hit-and-miss, because build details such as body and trim colour didn't always make it back to BMC in England, and so certificates often simply state a despatch date. Sadly, ours didn't even have that because the BMIHT replied to say that its build card had been lost. This was frustrating, because I had hoped to have some factory proof of the build year to correct the 1981 date on the Healey's registration certificate. That came about after the Healey was off the road for so long in the '70s that the authorities deemed it to have been scrapped.



New plates have restored the classic look

Salvation came when I bought a copy of Bill Piggott's *Factory-Original Austin-Healey 100/6 & 3000*, which details all production changes by month. The fact that our 100/6 has a post-48000 chassis number while still retaining an outside lock on the passenger door makes it a September '57 car.

To make up for the erroneous registration date, I decided to give the car some period plates and ordered a set of raised-and-riveted white–on–black items from Framptons while over in England for the Goodwood Revival. The UK registration system doesn't appear to have catered for the eight-digit configuration common to a lot of Cape Town cars, and which I had previously obtained to reflect the year and model of the Healey, but Framptons was happy to customise a plate and used marginally smaller (3⅛in as opposed to 3½in) digits to fit the number on. Now all that's left to do is to make that photocall at the top of Sir Lowry's Pass.

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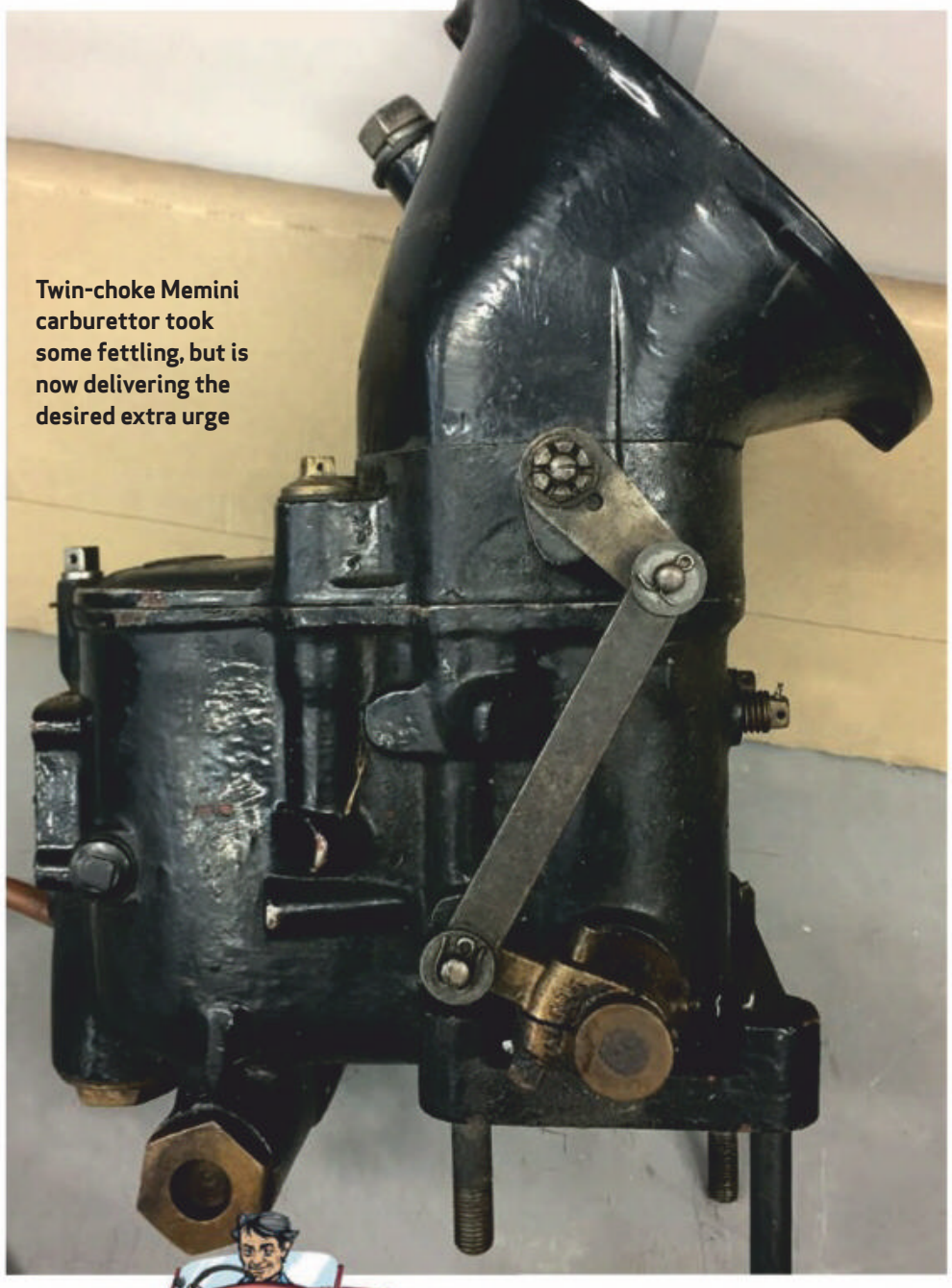
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Twin-choke Memini carburettor took some fettling, but is now delivering the desired extra urge



ALFA ROMEO 8C

RUN BY Alain de Cadenet
OWNED SINCE 1972
PREVIOUS REPORT Summer '17

A recent invitation to a rally in Tuscany prompted me to check out the 8C before the event. I finally found the original twin-choke Memini carburettor and decided to fit it, in the hope of getting more grunt than from the single-choke Weber. It's not difficult because the carbs have their own cast mounts that bolt on to the original blower flange. I took this flange off, just to make sure the gasket and sealant were serviceable. There was plenty of 140-weight oil present in the blower ball-races: always a good sign. Once it was back together, I brewed up and all sounded well.

When I went for a run prior to the start of the event, however, I did a plug cut at 3000rpm in top, only to find the plugs well sooted up. They need to be darker than the usual brown to keep the traditional rich needs of the combustion chamber. It was always thought in the old days that the heads would crack from valve seat to plug hole if you ran too lean. No need for that today with reasonable-octane fuels.

But my plugs were rather too black, so I put smaller jets in the mains on the Memini to lean it a little. This didn't work very well because I then got backfiring through the blow-off valves on the inlet manifold. I richened the jets a little, but then noticed that the air inlet on the carb had a thick piece of Scotchbrite in place to act as an air filter. Worse still, the Scotchbrite was held in by a piece of thin-gauge aluminium – copiously drilled with holes, but still diminishing the passage of air to the inlet. No wonder the mixture was so rich!

Doing away with the whole lot sorted it out nicely and restored the needed grunt. One of my erstwhile mechanics on the Le Mans team must have obliged me with this handiwork some 40 years ago, so a rollocking is not deliverable – or needed, of course: we all only tried to do our best!

I have also stopped making my own engine oil because I have been recommended Millers Pistoneeze 20w50, which already has the much-needed zinc/phosphorus blend. This is an essential additive for flat-top tappets to protect the tappets from the cam lobes.



JAGUAR E-TYPE S1

RUN BY Gaynor Cauter
OWNED SINCE 1980
PREVIOUS REPORT Dec 2017

'Operation Rescue Boo' is finally under way. My poor car has been stranded in a semi-dismantled state since winter, waiting for the chief mechanic/husband to get on with lifting the engine to replace the rear oil seal. The car hasn't been off the road for 22 years – which is not bad considering its mileage of 145,000 – but the job needed doing, as did two stripped threads in need of helicoiling in the head.

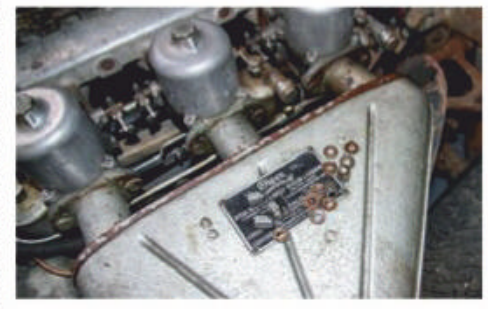
Unfortunately, said chief mechanic has decided to trade in Boo – and its owner – for a younger model, which has left me with no alternative but to roll up my sleeves and get the car into a fit state to at least drive it out of the garage.

Thanks to a chance introduction at Stoneleigh Park International Spares Day by Xclusively Jaguar's Letitia Mace to Gary Robinson of Swallows, I now have a top marque specialist lined up to help me get the car sorted. But before that could happen, I had two obstacles to overcome – namely, to put back the bits the chief mechanic had removed and failed to replace, and to somehow move a dead MkX and an S-type with no front suspension currently blocking Boo's escape.

Task one was to collect up the various nuts and bolts and work out where they belonged. I noticed that the distributor cap had been removed for some reason, but that was easily replaced. Next up was a pile of chromed nuts and washers from the cam covers. I had bought new gaskets to replace the ageing originals, which have been weeping oil for some time, but these were nowhere to be found so I didn't risk prising off the covers. Instead, I replaced the washers and nuts and tightened them, but still had several washers left over. At this point I noticed that some of the nuts had been replaced minus their washers, so I removed them all and popped a washer over each stud, before tightening the nuts in sequence.

One of the frustrating things about the engine bay is the state of the subframe, which has not been painted since the 1970s. On the two occasions the engine has been out, it has been for an emergency repair and hasn't allowed time to do any remedial work – the last time was in 2004 when the *C&SC* team was booked to go to the Le Mans Classic in convoy and Boo's clutch decided to fail a week before the trip. My marvellous mates at Surrey Jag Centre in Croydon sorted it and we made it to France… but the subframe remained untouched.

For now, it will have to wait because my priority is to get the MkX and the S-type moved (with the help of some Jaguar Drivers' Club colleagues) and liberate Boo into the care of Gary at Swallows.



Variety of cam-cover nuts left on the airbox



Happy days: in *C&SC* group at '04 Le Mans



Cauter replaces missing nuts and washers and tightens the cam covers

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SIHA



'It had been kept in London, Kent and Essex, but a key part of its history took place down the road from me'

From top: Escort's spec is spot-on for enthusiastic driving; Bailey will share his Mk2 passion with his kids

A CHILDHOOD FANTASY FULFILLED



FORD ESCORT MEXICO

OWNED BY Nick Bailey
FROM Shipston, Warwickshire
FIRST CLASSIC
MG Midget (my first car!)
DREAM CLASSIC
Renault 5 Turbo 2
BEST TRIP A clandestine run in a Volvo 940 to deliver parts to the Matra factory during the French strikes

It's the car I always promised myself, but it's not a Ford Capri. Working in the automotive industry I'm around cars every day, but it was childhood memories that fuelled a wish for a Mk2 Escort. Watching and hearing them on full song in local rallies left a deep impression, but there were also family moments. I vividly recall going car shopping with my nan and her letting me choose between an ex-Merseyside Police Mk2 or a yellow 1100 as her next car.

My own Escort search got serious 30 years later when my very understanding wife egged me on to ask an elderly gentleman, who had drawn up at the next petrol pump in his stock Mk2, if his car could be for sale. Handing him a hastily found piece of paper with my details on I thought that was it, but he said he'd lost count of the number of times people had done the same

A feature in *C&SC* about South African Escorts, extolling their rust-free shells, got me thinking about importing one, but they came with no history. After trying to buy a few and seeing some poor ones for sale, I bought a 205 Rallye (featured in *C&SC*, January 2007) while waiting for the right car.

With every website alert now set, this genuine but modified Mexico popped up one afternoon. Having known disappointment before, I was straight on the phone and made a plan to visit the following morning. With strict instructions from Mrs Bailey not to come back empty-handed, I bought it.

For me, it's the people and stories behind cars that make them special. I was immediately in touch with the car's previous owners, including Geoff Fletcher. He had rebuilt it into what I think is a very usable specification: 2.1 Pinto, five-speed 'box, quick rack, rollcage and lots of other period details that underline how he and the car's subsequent owner, Glyn Morgan, had truly cared for this particular 'Mex'.



The Mexico in its original shade of green



One detail that intrigued was the colour. It was black but the vendor had told me it was originally green, until re-shelled (not uncommon with Fords back then) when it was a year old. No one knew what the story was, but I was intent on finding out. With all the V5s, I started a trawl through the names.

By chance, a name matching the first owner's appeared on a trade show exhibition website. There was a mobile number and the location was about right, too. It was a long shot, but I quickly texted the number – and was glad I did.

Incredibly, within 10 minutes I had photos of the Mexico in period and the story unfolded. As a young man, Jeremy Rose had earned some money working in Angola for Gulf Oil and on his return headed to Perry's in Finchley to treat himself to a new Escort. Our Mexico was in the showroom and, rather than wait for the RS2000 he had planned to buy, he chose this one. It was fantastic to hear about the car's early days and how it had meant so much to him to be able to buy it.

Eager to understand the colour change, I discovered that, while returning from a day trip to Stratford-upon-Avon, there was a crash in Moreton-in-Marsh, just 15 minutes from I lived. The car had been kept in London, Kent and Essex all its life, but a key part of its history took place down the road from me. Superstitious about the colour, Jeremy opted for the new shell to be black. Mystery solved!

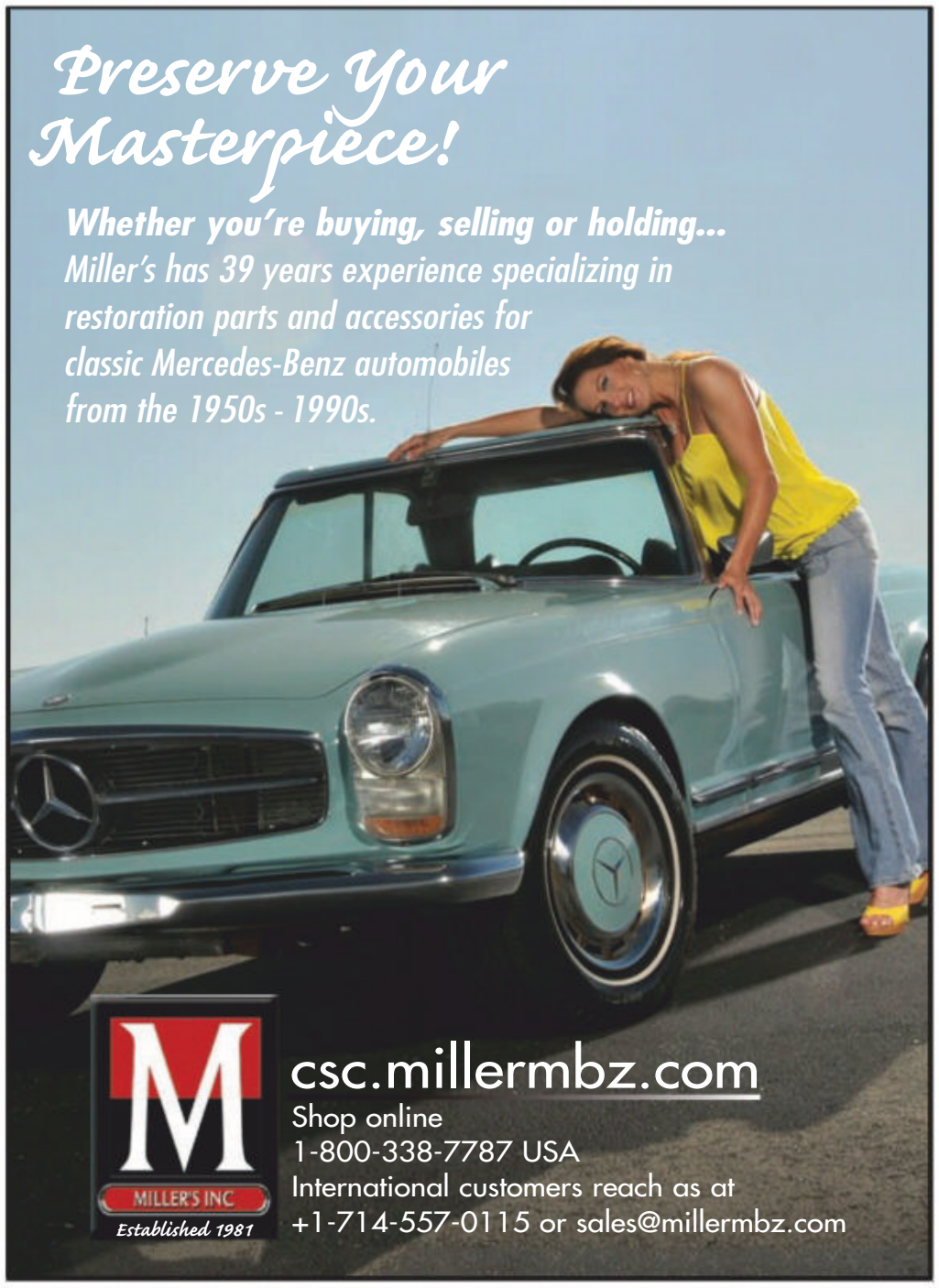
Last summer we got together, and 40 years after selling it Jeremy got another chance to experience why the Escort is the car we both promised ourselves. Today the Mk2 brings back the sights, sounds and smells of my childhood, and now the plan is to make a few more memories with my own children.

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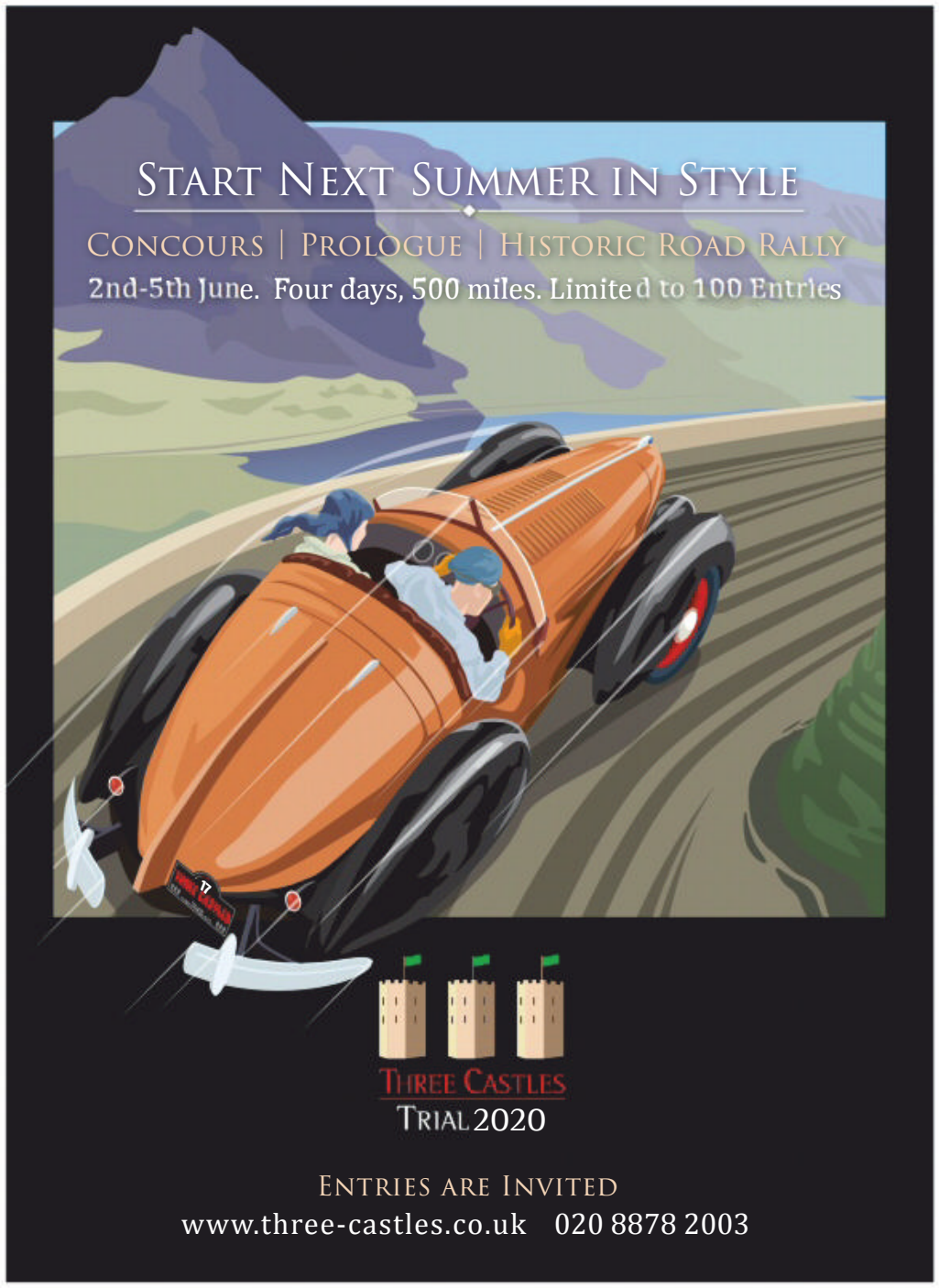


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07/18



From top: Gooch and his shared passions of unloved cars and vacuum cleaners; with prized Goblin Swebline and Electrolux Lite (r)

RICHIE GOOCH

The British Leyland enthusiast who has hoovered up a huge collection of vacuums

WORDS **GILES CHAPMAN** PHOTOGRAPHY **JOHN BRADSHAW**

Richie Gooch is a rescuer – of overlooked cars and obsolete vacuum cleaners. Here's a dark-blue Electrolux Chic. "A 1990s machine: basic but very powerful and reliable," he says. "I had to save it, I couldn't let it go to landfill." Here, too, an orange Morris Ital. A look of sadness flits across his face: "Trouble is, there are more Itals and Marinas than people who want them. But you do your best to save them because you don't want them melted down and turned into a Hyundai i10."

When you open the doors to Gooch's garage, the plastic and brushed-aluminium nose of a 1979 Datsun Cherry F11 coupé greets you. Its exceptional rarity, originality and cleanliness mean it has beaten 15 other contenders to this prized spot. An FSO Polonez, Matra Rancho and Vauxhall Victor FE cast mournful, rheumy headlights towards their Japanese overlord.

Not that you can actually see much Cherry. Around, behind and on top of it are old vacuum cleaners and their packaging, hoses, nozzles, brushes and handles. Cleaning machines from dozens of understairs cupboards await the day when they will fascinate visitors to Gooch's long-planned museum. And who couldn't love the '60s Hoover Constellation, a space race-inspired globe with hovercraft technology that means it floats above your carpet pile as you work.

ALSO IN MY GARAGE



"People may think they're weird," he says, "but they've been with me all my life. My dad repaired vacuum cleaners from his home workshop."

He got the car bug first, studying body repair at college before having numerous jobs in the trade. But he also absorbed all his old man's repair expertise and sympathies. Today, he works for a Brighton vacuum firm as its resident guru: "I always liked the '60s, '70s and '80s models and I picked up one or two. Soon I had 10, then a hundred, and now I have about 400."

Gooch inhabits a world just as esoteric as the classic car one. He knows at least 20 collectors – memory-link obsessives, vintage aficionados, and connoisseurs who curate their displays like a department store electrical floor.

He wrenches opens his shed door. Inside, it's packed with machines both rare and familiar, and he has an encyclopaedic knowledge of them. From the Hoover Senior upright with its 'Dirt Searcher' headlight to the bargain-basement Goblin Laser from mail-order catalogues; the Swedish Electrolux cylinder with its elegant engineering to early examples of the Numatic Henry with their legendary ruggedness.

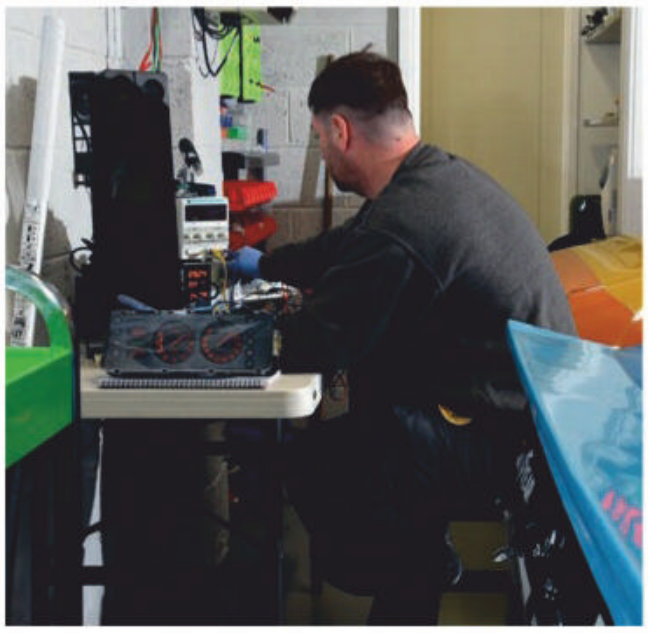
"Modern machines have circuit boards and sealed-unit motors so you can't work on them," Gooch explains, "a bit like new cars with ECUs. But on older models you can strip the motors because they're sectional: you've got armatures, field coils, bearings, carbon brushes. You can rebuild and grease them; it's very satisfying."

Many of the cars that come Gooch's way are free, as long as he promises to take them away. But vacuum-cleaner addicts are driving up prices for pristine examples. Such as the Goblin he's just found in Birmingham: it's a £500 piece with its original carton and has never even had a plug fitted. You'll struggle to find anything similar discarded today; it's mostly broken Dysons that jut out of skips. Even then, Gooch knows his stuff: "The Dyson DC04 is the one – it's one of the earliest and best models they ever made…"

R5 Turbo 2 (furthest) is in for restoration, while Melliard's own Turbo is used for development; Zakspeed (black) and Terzi Escorts ran in the Italian championship



Melliard refits the ancillaries to Renault 5 Turbo 2 engine



Testing instrument cluster before repair or recalibration



Freshly built Group 2 Ford Capri racer will be on track soon

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WORDS **PAUL HARDIMAN** PHOTOGRAPHY **WILL WILLIAMS**





Rebuilt 'unrebuildable' de Carbon dampers

It's the attention to detail that strikes you – that and the shiny floor that's clean enough to eat from. Read any recent Renault 5 Turbo story in the UK press and the path tends to lead back to Oliver 'Olly' Melliard. This enthusiast doesn't unquestioningly follow the accepted wisdom: by measurement, trial and error he finds out what works and why, using his own car as a testbed. And by examining what makes Renault 5 Turbos tick, he engineers new parts and solutions to make them work better.

For example, the supposedly 'non-serviceable' de Carbon dampers, unique to the 5 Turbo. Melliard has worked out how to rebuild and re-gas them, and sells the 'new' ones on an exchange basis, complete with a perfectly replicated satin-orange finish and stencil-painted lettering, as original. Looking at the level of detail, you can see where £1500 goes.

Gauges not working? No problem. Auto-electronics specialist Gary can interrogate and repair the mostly analogue displays. "I'm analysing the boards and working out the component values, so I can recalibrate the instruments," he explains, mercifully offering the short version after losing us at 'waveforms'. "We're pleased to bring that in-house – before it was a 12-week wait," adds Melliard, who has also commissioned new aluminium roof tooling, and offers a brake upgrade to suit either 13 or 15in wheels: "It's non-invasive, with a servo delete. You don't need Group B brakes for the road.

"As a family we grew up with Renaults in every form and my dad always wanted a 'squashed hamster', as he called them. Circumstance kept me from any toys, so when I went to work for Simon Hadfield in 2002 the lifestyle change helped me to irresponsibly buy what Dad had wanted. It was then my only car and I commuted in it – I did the weekly shopping in it!

"Renault 5 Turbos are now starting to be owned by grown-ups – many of whom are prepared to spend the money they need: very few have done that over the past 20 years and plenty are now puffed-out, which also means people don't have a reference point."

Racks of parts – a mixture of recommissioned components and "stuff you can't make" – line the walls, including light units sourced via eBay, electric Vitaloni Tornado mirrors common with the Ferrari BB, and new-old-stock aluminium R5 tailgates, made at the factory on the original presses by slipping some ally blanks in between production runs. If you want to buy one think of a number, and good luck ever finding another. On a table, beautifully anodised clamps and fittings are laid out. This meticulous method migrates across all Melliard's projects.

That's a real Zakspeed Escort in the workshop – chassis one of a three-car team that won the '79 European Touring Car Championship – because Melliard offers race support and restoration, too: "It's a proper 1840cc four-speed works car still in its original paint. The blue one next to it is Terzi 08, the Group 2 car that ran in the 1980 Italian championship. During that year they ran as rivals and it's the first time they've been together since." The Group 2 Capri is a new build with Weslake slide-throttle engine: "We're just going through it to wake it up while the ex-Klaus Ludwig Cologne-built Capri that we run is out over Christmas with its owner." Outside, a Porsche tractor, fresh from auction, belongs to another client and a Group 5 turbo Escort awaits its turn.

"Our work ethic for R5 Turbos follows race-car preparation principles as closely as we can," explains Melliard. "I think we also offer the personal touch. Any customer or enthusiast will always receive real hospitality and first dibs on any information, events or tip-offs by being part of the family."

The knowledge

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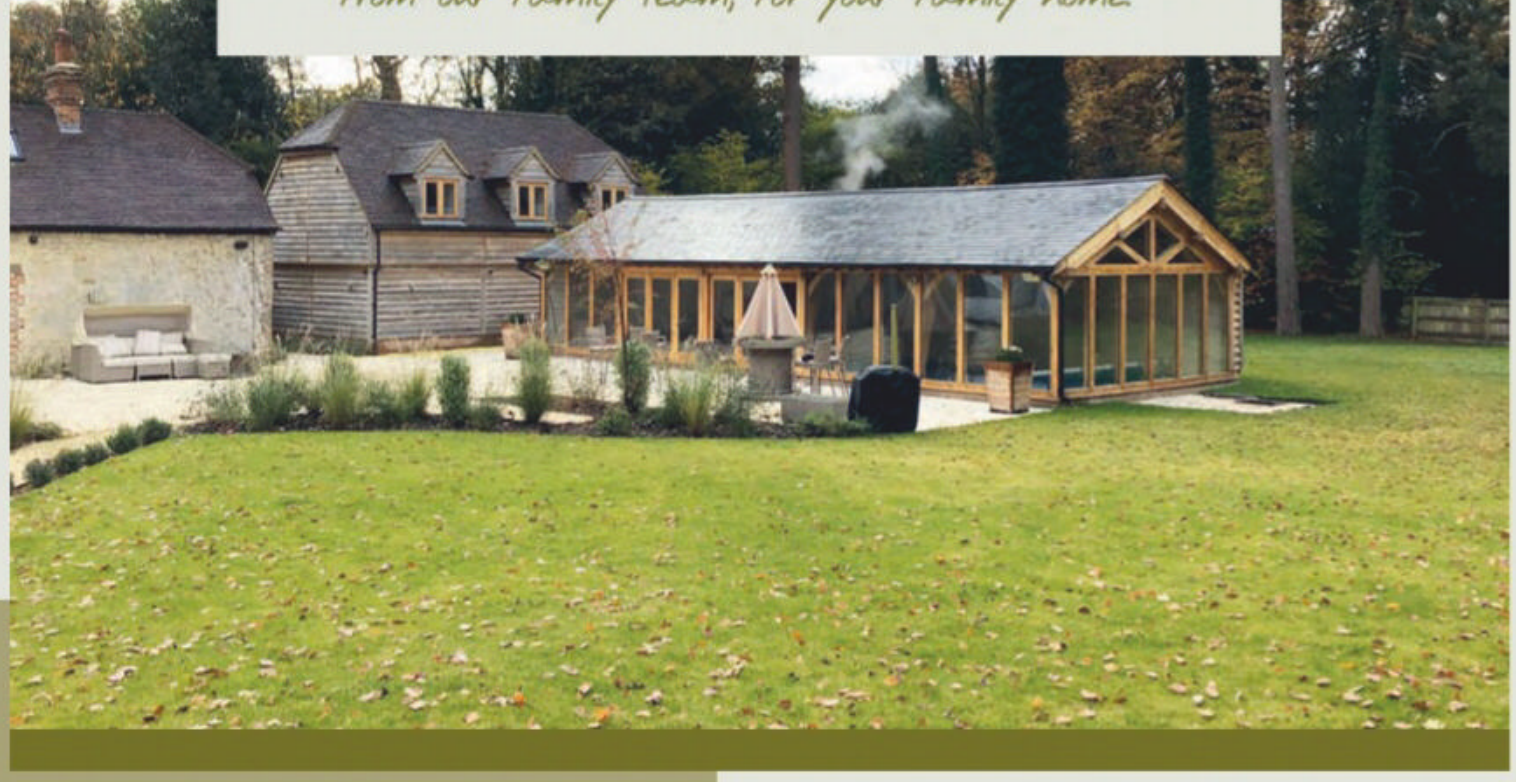
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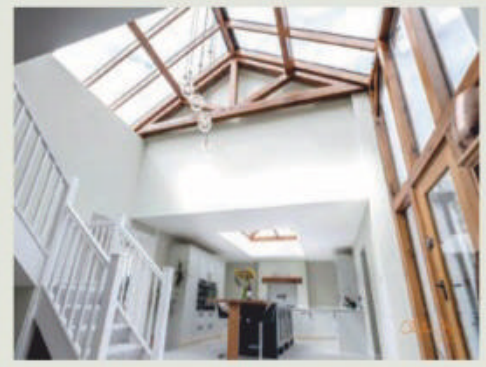












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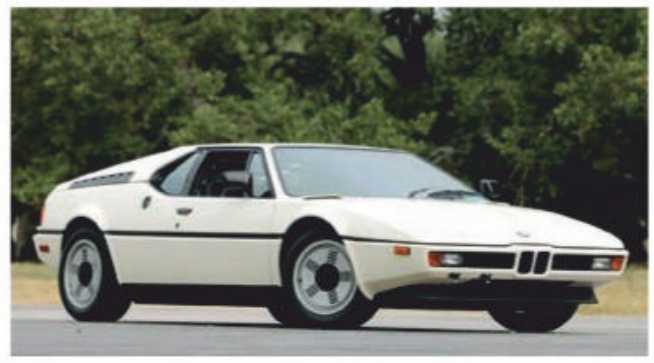
The Pagani Zonda set and then re-set model records at auction in the Middle East in November, as two unique examples fetched multi-million-dollar figures.

At the Riyadh Motor Show in Saudi Arabia on 22 November, Silverstone Auctions realised $5,885,000 for the striking Riviera. Not only was it the highest-ever price for the auctioneer, it was also a model record. Yet within a week the equally unique 'Aether' model eclipsed it by some $800,000.

Estimated to sell for between $4.5m and $5.5m, the 760-spec Pagani beat a Grand Prix winner to top lot in RM Sotheby's sale on the eve of the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix – relegating one of Michael Schumacher's most famous Formula One cars to second place. The Ferrari F2002 on offer, chassis 219, took the German to three victories and helped secure his fifth title. It sold for $6,643,750 to become the second most expensive F1 car ever sold at auction – $900k shy of the F2001 sold in 2017.

There were records broken elsewhere in Riyadh. Worldwide Auctioneers set a new benchmark for a custom build in its sale on 23 November when the incredible 4000bhp big-rig Peterbilt known as 'Thor' sold for $13.2million.

Featuring twin V12 diesel engines, nitrous and 12 superchargers, the 130mph truck has the biggest engine that has ever been installed in a road-legal vehicle. The 1984 Peterbilt 359 Ultra Custom TT Crew Cab project took seven years to finish.



Among Worldwide's other lots was a BMW M1 with just 700km on its odometer. It achieved $1.1m, believed to be a model record.

Full results have not yet been forthcoming from Worldwide or Silverstone Auctions.

From top: Pagani Zonda 'Aether' on the Abu Dhabi circuit; barely used BMW M1 hit seven figures

HISTORIC JAGUAR E-TYPE RACER UP FOR GRABS

The original CUT 7 Jaguar E-type, whose registration has been fondly remembered since the fixed-head coupé finished sixth in the 1962 Tourist Trophy at Goodwood in the hands of owner Dick Protheroe, is back on the market via London-based dealer Henderson-Fellowes.

Road registered – 636 CJU – at the end of that first season, it was returned to the track by the popular John Young before its former pilot Gerry Marshall pointed Colin Pearcey to the car in the 2000s. He put it back to its former livery, with a blue stripe across its nose contrasting the dark grey.

Its later owners have included Nick Whale and Baron Drayson, and Richard Meins has been a regular in the car at the Goodwood Revival.

Price on application.



CUT 7 has graced a few E-types, but none before this



A Swallow, from William Lyons' precursor marque to Jaguar Cars, will feature in CMC sale

CMC certifies entries

Classic Motor Cars will host the UK's first auction in which every running car except barn-finds and restoration projects will have a new MoT certificate, and have been road tested by the company itself. The sale will take place at CMC's Classic and Retro Day on 30 May.

"The reason we are carrying out a road test and issuing a certificate stems from a recent incident at CMC," explains managing director Nigel Woodward. "We were approached to sell a fantastic-looking two-seater sports car, which we were told by the vendor was 100% in every respect. Upon inspection, the underside was completely rotten and the car just wasn't what it purported to be so we rejected it. A few weeks later it appeared in a catalogue from a well-known auction house who described it as immaculate."

The inspection certificate will remain with the car whether it sells or not. Among the lots entered so far are a Swallow, a non-running barn-find Jaguar E-type Series 2 fhc that was once driven by Graham Hill in the Lord Mayor's Show, and a 1954 Austin-Healey 100 racer.

A large collection of automobilia will feature items on offer from the Norman Dewis estate, including his desk and his briefcase.

GALLERY AALDERING'S BIG SALE

Netherlands-based classic car specialist Gallery Aaldering will host its third online Warehouse Auction this month, with bidding open from 9 January at 5pm local time until 8:30pm on 29 January.

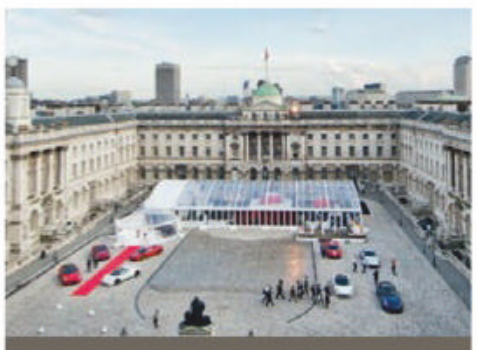
There will be four viewing days at the showroom in Brummen, around 100km south-east of the capital Amsterdam. The first of the open days will be held at the premises on 18 January, followed by 24, 25 and 28, with access between 10am and 4pm.

Around 200 cars are expected to be available, an increase on the previous two sales, with much of the lot list comprising cars that have been traded-in throughout the past year. Details on exactly what will be sold have not been confirmed, but an eclectic mix for all prices can be expected.

The bidding will be hosted on www.classiccar-auctions.com



Gallery Aaldering's expansive showroom



Gooding claims 'unparalled collection'

GOODING SET FOR LONDON

Californian auction house Gooding & Co is coming to London for an exclusive sale on the evening of 1 April, with viewing the day before.

Taking over Somerset House in central London, the lot list will comprise road and racing cars from a range of special private collections.

More details will be revealed online at goodingco.com



The DB4GT is one of only nine factory lightweights and has had one owner since 1965

Bonhams and JBR link

The Bonhams Bond Street Sale in London on 7 December marked the first official chapter in a new partnership between the auction house and financier JBR Capital.

Initially trialled during the Goodwood Revival sale, the deal means JBR will be on hand at selected Bonhams events in 2020 to provide finance solutions.

A no-reserve Aston Martin DB4GT proved to be the star lot on the day, selling for £2.3m (£2-3m estimate). Of the 35 cars listed, 22 went unsold, including a Bentley R-type expected to fetch between £900,000 and £1.2m; the first Bugatti Veyron in the UK (£850,000-1.25m); and an Alfa Romeo 6C-1750 (£800,000-1.2m).

Auction diary

JANUARY

10 BH Auction Fuji, Japan *0081 (120) 087 111; bhauction.com*

10-11 BH Auction Tokyo, Japan *0081 (120) 087 111; bhauction.com*

11-19 Barrett-Jackson Scottsdale, Arizona, USA *001 480 421 6694; barrett-jackson.com*

15 Worldwide Auctioneers Scottsdale, Arizona, USA *001 260 925 6789; worldwideauctioneers.com*

15-19 Rosso and Steele Scottsdale, Arizona, USA *001 602 252 2697; russoandsteele.com*

16 Bonhams Scottsdale, Arizona, USA *001 323 850 7500; bonhams.com*

16-17 RM Sotheby's Arizona, USA *001 519 352 4575; rmsothebys.com*

17 Coys Maastricht, The Netherlands *020 8614 7888; coys.co.uk*

17-18 Gooding & Co Scottsdale, Arizona, *USA 001 310 899 1960; goodingco.com*

25 ACA King's Lynn, Norfolk *01553 771881; angliacarauctions.co.uk*

25 Osenat Fontainebleau, France *0033 1 80 81 90 59; osenat.com*

31 SWVA Poole, Dorset *01202 745466; swva.co.uk*



Rare and recently restored BMW 507 could star at RM Sotheby's Paris sale

FEBRUARY

5 RM Sotheby's Paris, France *0033 1 76 75 32 93; rmsothebys.com*

6 Bonhams Paris, France *0033 1 42 61 10 11; bonhams.com*

7 Artcurial Rétromobile, Paris, France *0033 1 42 99 20 73; artcurial.com*

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Buckley's market matters

I have conceived a new genre of classic: the sell-out. Cars that sold their maker or model's hard-won reputation down the river in pursuit of a quick buck. Cars that can still make you groan, or worse.

The Americans have done it best. Be it Mustangs, Rivieras, Thunderbirds, or almost anything else, they were masters in the art of progressively sucking the joy out of anything that showed any hint of individuality, usually by making it bigger and more luxurious to appeal to a wider audience. Or slower and smaller in the '70s: listing them all would suck the joy out of this column.

Easier to pinpoint in terms of raw cynicism are European examples, Britain and Italy being the prime movers in the rush for cheap, short-term advantage.

Who thought that the Riley 4/72 – a badge-engineered Austin Cambridge with twin carbs – was a way of furthering the marque's cause? It once made great sports cars and saloons, not far away in character from the sporty middleweights that revived BMW.

Likewise the Rover SD1, the first of the bad Rovers rather than the last of the 'real' ones, I think.

What did P5 and P6 buyers think about the flimsy feel? I'm regularly told that BMWs and Mercedes are not what they used to be, but did any car, before or since, trample on the memory of its forebears so compressively as the 1976 3500?

The best sell-out Mini has to be the 1275GT. How can you go from a Cooper 'S' to that? The E-type 2+2 and the 280ZX will always be the least-loved variants of their respective stables because they cynically tipped the balance in favour of comfort and safety to the detriment of looks and driver appeal. Merely to court the whims of buyers, these lean athletes turned into flabby has-beens. Did I say 'mere' buyers? They pay the bills, but the really great cars are the ones that gave people what they didn't know they wanted.

I'm not sure anyone knew they wanted an Alfa Romeo Arna, a Nissan Cherry with an Alfasud engine. The air of desperation was palpable, a sad commentary on the depths to which Alfa had sunk. Memories are short and, like an unfortunate incident in a gents' lavatory, it was quickly forgotten.

Lancia should probably have been given a season ticket to Dignitas after the demise of the Integrale, but who would have bet on Maserati still being around in 2020? Fiat money and Ferrari expertise have burnished the name to a high lustre, but 30 years ago, in the midst of the Biturbo era, many lovers of the marque must have been praying somebody would put it out of its misery.

Which brings me neatly to a car that outguns even that: the Chrysler TC by Maserati, based on the anaemic front-drive four-cylinder Dodge Daytona and trimmed (badly) by Maserati. This is the motoring equivalent of Dame Helen Mirren suddenly deciding to go topless on *Big Brother* to save her career. Not classy, but it at least makes the Biturbo and its offspring look almost noble.



Even an Alfa flat-four couldn't rescue the Nissan-based Arna

AUCTION RESULTS
November's top 50 sales



Aston Martin DB5 was one of two sold by Silverstone Auctions for £600,000+ at the NEC



Sole remaining Ferrari 126 sold in the UAE

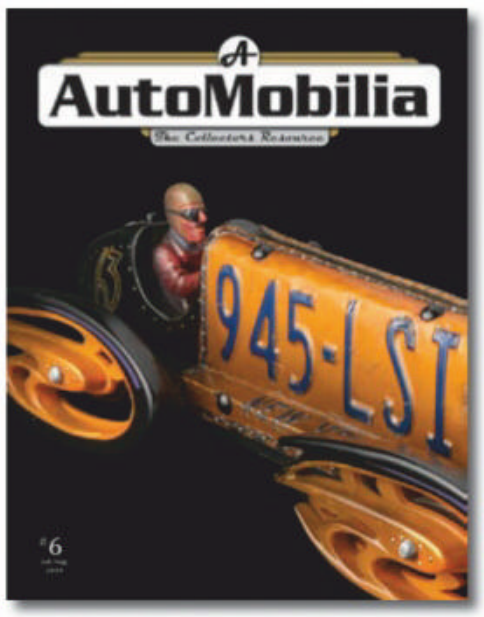


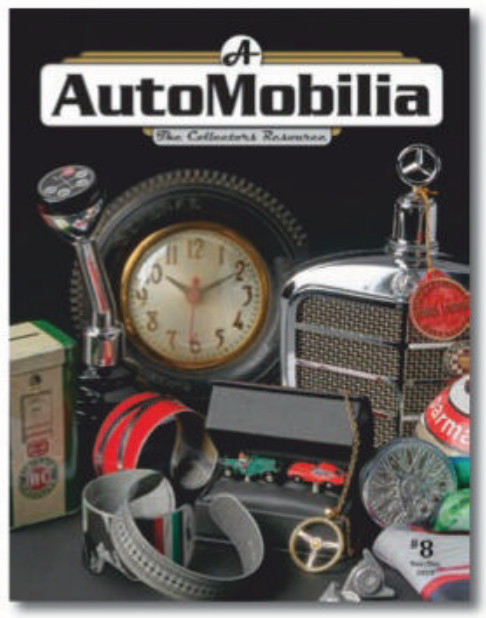
Bentley 3 Litre from Bonhams at Hendon

PRICE	CAR	SALE
£10,074,636	**1984 Peterbilt 359 Ultra Custom TT Crew Cab**	Worldwide Auctioneers, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
£5,313,750	**2017 Pagani Zonda 'Aether'**	RM Sotheby's, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
£5,182,125	**2002 Ferrari F2002**	RM Sotheby's, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
£4,472,600	**2017 Pagani Zonda Riviera**	Silverstone Auctions, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
£3,339,375	**2015 Ferrari FXXK**	RM Sotheby's, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
£1,672,125	**1982 Ferrari 126**	RM Sotheby's, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
£1,233,375	**1956 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Gullwing**	RM Sotheby's, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
£1,123,688	**2011 Aston Martin One-77**	RM Sotheby's, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
£1,057,875	**2014 Koenigsegg Agera R**	RM Sotheby's, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
£853,860	**2015 McLaren P1**	Silverstone Auctions, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
£847,275	**1996 Zagato Raptor**	RM Sotheby's, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
£780,000	**1981 BMW M1**	Worldwide Auctioneers, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
£691,220	**2017 Ferrari F12tdf**	Silverstone Auctions, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
£643,500	**1993 Porsche 911 Reimagined by Singer**	RM Sotheby's, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
£618,750	**1965 Aston Martin DB5**	Silverstone Auctions, NEC Classic Motor Show, UK
£610,350	**1993 Porsche 911 RSR 3.8**	RM Sotheby's, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
£607,500	**1965 Aston Martin DB5**	Silverstone Auctions, NEC Classic Motor Show, UK
£584,025	**2015 Mercedes-Benz G63 AMG 6x6**	RM Sotheby's, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
£442,750	**1901 Panhard et Levassor 7hp**	Bonhams, London to Brighton Run, UK
£409,500	**2001 Lamborghini Diablo**	RM Sotheby's, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
£377,813	**1973 Ferrari 365GTB/4**	RM Sotheby's, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
£373,425	**1993 Jaguar XJ220**	RM Sotheby's, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
£362,813	**1993 Jaguar XJ220**	Silverstone Auctions, NEC Classic Motor Show, UK
£333,938	**2012 Lexus LFA**	RM Sotheby's, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
£320,775	**2015 Ferrari 458 Speciale A**	RM Sotheby's, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
£287,500	**1926 Bentley 3 Litre**	Bonhams, RAF Hendon, UK
£258,750	**1955 Triumph TR2**	Silverstone Auctions, NEC Classic Motor Show, UK
£240,000	**1971 Mercedes-Benz 600**	Historics, Mercedes Benz World, UK
£238,500	**1972 Ferrari Dino 246GT**	Shannons, Sydney Spring Classic, Australia
£237,900	**1979 Lamborghini Countach**	RM Sotheby's, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
£236,250	**1973 Ferrari Dino 246GT**	Silverstone Auctions, NEC Classic Motor Show, UK
£225,950	**2005 Lamborghini Murciélago**	Aguttes, Lyon, France
£224,250	**1900 MMC 6HP**	Bonhams, London to Brighton Run, UK
£220,740	**1925 Bentley 3 Litre**	Historics, Mercedes Benz World, UK
£211,432	**2009 Mercedes-Benz SLR Brabus Roadster**	Silverstone Auctions, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
£204,000	**1975 Ferrari Dino 246GT**	Osenat, Chassieu, France
£202,500	**1984 Aston Martin V8**	Silverstone Auctions, NEC Classic Motor Show, UK
£199,750	**1973 Ferrari Dino 246GT**	Aguttes, Lyon, France
£198,900	**1968 Ferrari 365GT 2+2**	Osenat, Chassieu, France
£195,500	**1973 Ferrari Dino 246GT**	Bonhams, RAF Hendon, UK
£187,036	**1995 Porsche 911 (993) turbo**	Silverstone Auctions, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
£183,885	**2001 BMW Z8**	RM Sotheby's, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
£159,850	**1934 Bentley 3½-litre**	Bonhams, RAF Hendon, UK
£155,250	**1984 Aston Martin V8**	Silverstone Auctions, NEC Classic Motor Show, UK
£155,000	**1966 Jaguar E-type S1 roadster**	Historics, Mercedes Benz World, UK
£151,875	**1960 Jaguar XK150 3.8 dhc**	Silverstone Auctions, NEC Classic Motor Show, UK
£148,000	**2013 Noble M600**	Silverstone Auctions, NEC Classic Motor Show, UK
£143,520	**2008 Rolls-Royce Phantom**	RM Sotheby's, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
£138,000	**1933 Rolls-Royce 20/25**	Bonhams, RAF Hendon, UK
£138,000	**1899 Star Benz**	Bonhams, London to Brighton Run, UK

Prices include buyer's premium. Exchange rate used: $1 = 75p. For our full database of sale results, see ***www.classicandsportscar.com/auctions***

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ALFA ROMEO 156 GTA

The GTA for the new millennium is already becoming highly collectible

WORDS **MALCOLM McKAY** PHOTOGRAPHY **JAMES MANN**



By the end of the 20th century, most everyday saloons were pretty similar and boring, with the focus moving away from looks to crash safety, and excitement limited to new driver aids. The Alfa Romeo 156 broke the mould: sharp styling with clever hidden rear doorhandles made it look exciting, and the interior didn't disappoint either. But the real thrill came in the new millennium, when Alfa launched the 156 GTA with 250bhp, lowered suspension, Brembo brakes and a six-speed transmission, with optional Selespeed semi-auto, plus a fabulous soundtrack and super-quick steering. A five-door Sportwagon estate would follow, as a highly desirable occasional load carrier in the Scimitar GTE mould.

Sure, it lacked the ultimate performance of a Subaru Impreza WRX STi or the durability of an E46 BMW, but it had character and style. The GTA's charisma – and its rarity – have made it increasingly desirable and prices are rising, with specialists ready to restore and upgrade.

Autocar loved its looks, pace and brakes, but was less impressed by the hard ride, poor turning circle, high fuel consumption and over-servoed, kart-quick steering. The leather-lined interior and luxury features such as heated seats, climate control, cruise control, electric windows and Bose speakers give a classy feel, but make it costly to put right today if neglect has taken its toll.

Upgrades are available from specialists such as Autolusso, including a 3.8-litre engine, uprated suspension and brakes (the 305mm discs were prone to warping), or a Quaife limited-slip diff. The latter, optional when new, is recommended for press-on drivers because it helps reduce the pronounced understeer of the standard car – and the tendency for the factory diff to fail catastrophically when caned, damaging the gearbox. Budget around £1000 for a Quaife installation – less costly than a new 'box…

Many traditional Alfa features are carried through – including corrosion, sadly. It's not excessive for the car's age, but complicated by the lack of availability of correct new front wings and floors, so every repair has to be handcrafted. Ironically, the wheelarch liners – put there for protection – rub away the paint and encourage rust to start: enthusiastic owners better secure the liners to prevent this from happening. Check carefully for rust and poor past repairs because it can be extensive and expensive to sort.

Trouble spots

CAMBELT Make sure it has been replaced recently – every four to five years is wise

BONNET CATCH These are prone to sticking, allowing the bonnet to fly up – so check that any repairs have been done properly

CORROSION Front and rear wheelarches, floors and sills rot, as do the spring cups on the rear struts: check all of the underside very thoroughly, along with the radiator

ELECTRONICS Watch for failing digital readouts and unwanted warning lights (such as airbag, ABS and engine management)

SUSPENSION Bushes wear and upgrades are common, but make sure you can live with the resulting firm ride

STEERING The set-up is incredibly quick for a road car; check for wear in the rack





Styled in-house by Walter de Silva, the 156 is a real looker and is at its macho best in GTA form. Low build numbers make it an increasingly desirable Alfa





Behind the wheel, the GTA will cosset you like any modern prestige car with heated seats, climate control and plenty of toys, but you can add to that true Italian character: a terrific engine sound, effortless torque, great performance – and a frisson of excitement from its hard ride and lightning-quick steering



The 24-valve, quad-cam V6 **engine** is robust if it's serviced regularly and well looked after – cambelt replacement is best at 48,000 miles rather than the 72,000 recommended by the factory, along with the tensioner, idlers and water pump. Poor performance is often just the MAF (mass air flow) sensor failing



Look for **radiator** leaks, and budget to replace if it's suspect; if a new rad has been fitted, check for signs of head-gasket failure from overheating



The six-speed **gearbox** should be smooth; if the clutch is heavy, it may need replacing. Selespeeds are less desirable because parts are scarce



Early 305mm front **brakes** are often improved with later 330mm rotors; front suspension bushes get a hard life so be prepared to replace them



Electronics can give nightmares, so check everything works and no warning lights stay on; an airbag light is an MoT fail, but usually an easy fix



Howling V6 engine dominates the Alfa's character, while firm suspension and sharp steering make it lively through the curves

On the road

The Alfa V6 is phenomenally flexible, pulling all the way from 500rpm, which should have made the GTA relaxing and easy to drive, given its performance. However, the hyper-quick steering detracted from that, making the car feel nervous at speed, and the very poor turning circle, resulting from the big wheels, could be an embarrassment. A hard ride, even with standard bushes, made it uncomfortable on poorly maintained roads. The driving position doesn't suit all, but at least there are heated leather seats: check all the electronic functions work.

A full and detailed service history is great to have and enhances the value but, even if it's there, take a good look under the bonnet and beneath the car for signs that it's really been well looked after. Is the engine undertray there? It's low and vulnerable, but helps protect the aluminium sump. How old does the oil filter look, and is the oil level correct? Is the clutch slave cylinder leaking fluid? What exhaust system is fitted, and are the cats there? It's highly unlikely to pass an MoT without them.

Question whether the servicing has been by a specialist that knows the GTA's quirks, and uses the right tools and parts. Suspension wears front and rear, so budget £1000 to go through all of the bushes and joints if there are no bills showing it's been done recently. Five-hole alloys were standard, 16-spokes optional – but the 330mm disc conversion won't fit behind the earlier 16-spokes, only the five-holes.

Owning one



"I liked the GTA when it first came out," explains serial Alfa and Italian-car fan **Mark Crawley**. "When my Maserati Ghibli was stolen, I began looking for a GTA – it's less likely to be taken because it fits in my garage! I've had six Alfas – they have a lot more flair than most modern cars. I saw a blue GTA two years ago and nearly bought it, but when this one came up in 2018, I grabbed it. The previous owner had spent £15k on a respray, a Ferrari F430 throttle body, rebuilt suspension, a performance exhaust and 330mm brakes – he even made a bespoke alloy engine undertray. I intend to keep it and enjoy it – in an age of boring cars, there's nothing quite like it. I'm planning a few improvements: the digital display in the dash is breaking up and I've found a firm in Rochester than can rebuild it."

"I began looking for one after my Maserati was stolen – the GTA is less likely to be taken because it fits in my garage!"

Alternatives



BMW 330i (E46) *2000-'05, production n/a*
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SUBARU IMPREZA WRX STi *2002-'05, n/a*
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The knowledge

TIMELINE

1997 156 range launched: two diesels, three variable-valve Twin Sparks and 187bhp V6
2001 Sep GTA and Sportwagon GTA launched at the Frankfurt Motor Show
2002 RHD cars arrive in the UK
2002 Dec GTAm shown at Bologna Show: 3.5-litre, 300bhp, but didn't enter production
2003 Nov 330mm front brake discs fitted, less prone to warping; other 156 models get Giugiaro facelift, never applied to GTA
2004 Mar Autodelta Sportwagon GTA 3.5 shown at Geneva Salon
2005 Oct Production ends

FACTFILE

Sold/number built 2001-'05/1973 saloons, 1678 Sportwagons
Construction steel monocoque
Engine all-alloy, dohc-per-bank 3179cc 24v V6, Bosch Motronic fuel injection
Max power 250bhp @ 6200rpm
Max torque 221lb ft @ 4800rpm
Transmission six-speed manual or Selespeed button-shift auto, driving front wheels with ASR (Anti Slip Regulation), optional LSD
Suspension independent, at **front** by double wishbones, coil springs **rear** MacPherson struts; anti-roll bar f/r
Steering power-assisted rack and pinion
Brakes 12/13in (305/330mm) front, 11in (276mm) rear vented discs, with servo, anti-lock and electronic brake force distribution
Length 16ft 6in (4430mm) **Width** 5ft 9½in (1765mm) **Height** 4ft 7in-4ft 7½in (1395-1411mm) **Wheelbase** 8ft 6in (2595mm) **Weight** 3109-3219lb (1410-1460kg) **0-60mph** 6.5 secs
Top speed 150mph **Mpg** 15-30
Price new £26,900/27,900 (2002 saloon/SW)

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WHAT TO PAY

Show/rebuilt	£15,000
Average	£7500
Restoration	£3000

OUR VERDICT

The GTA has come of age: its strengths as a desirable classic outweigh its weaknesses against some contemporaries, and tired examples are now being rescued and restored. Its rarity in either body style, in every market, means that demand is outstripping supply. Beware cars that have been neglected, crashed, highly modified or thrashed to within an inch of their lives on track days.

FOR
Great character, with modern toys and creature comforts in a car that looks and sounds stunning, and has more than enough performance

AGAINST
Hard ride, dire turning circle and understeers when pressed; prone to rust and poor parts availability



One you can buy

Year 2004 **Recorded mileage** 63,000km
Price £8995 **Vendor** Distinto Cars & Classics, Birmingham; 0121 340 7777; distintoclassics.com
For Condition; sound **Against** Selespeed hits value

First registered in Japan in February 2004, this smart wagon arrived in the UK in 2018 and has been little used since. Extras include the winter pack with heated seats and xenon headlamps with washers, plus Bose audio and sat-nav system.

It's clearly been well looked after and is clean and rot-free underneath (the wheelarch liners are secure, the rear half of the exhaust lightly rusted). There are eight Japanese inspection/service slips, plus a recent £1130 MotorMech bill for a big service including replacement cambelt, water pump and new engine mounts. The body is straight and undinged, with no scuffs even under the chin, and the wheels are not kerbed. The P Zeros are dated 2014 but hardly worn, confirming the minimal recent mileage.

Inside it's wearing well, with perfect plastics and headlining, and mileage-commensurate light creasing to the front leather. The windows all work, but the air-con doesn't blow cold.

The motor will need a new battery, but once fired up the V6 sounds great and it drives very nicely, with taut handling and sharp brakes. The Selespeed shifts well, in both 'manual' and City (automatic) modes. It's sold with handbooks (in Japanese), a spare key and radio keycode card, plus an MoT until near the end of January.



Handsome Japanese-market Sportwagon is well presented


Generously equipped cabin is smart; rear seat looks unworn



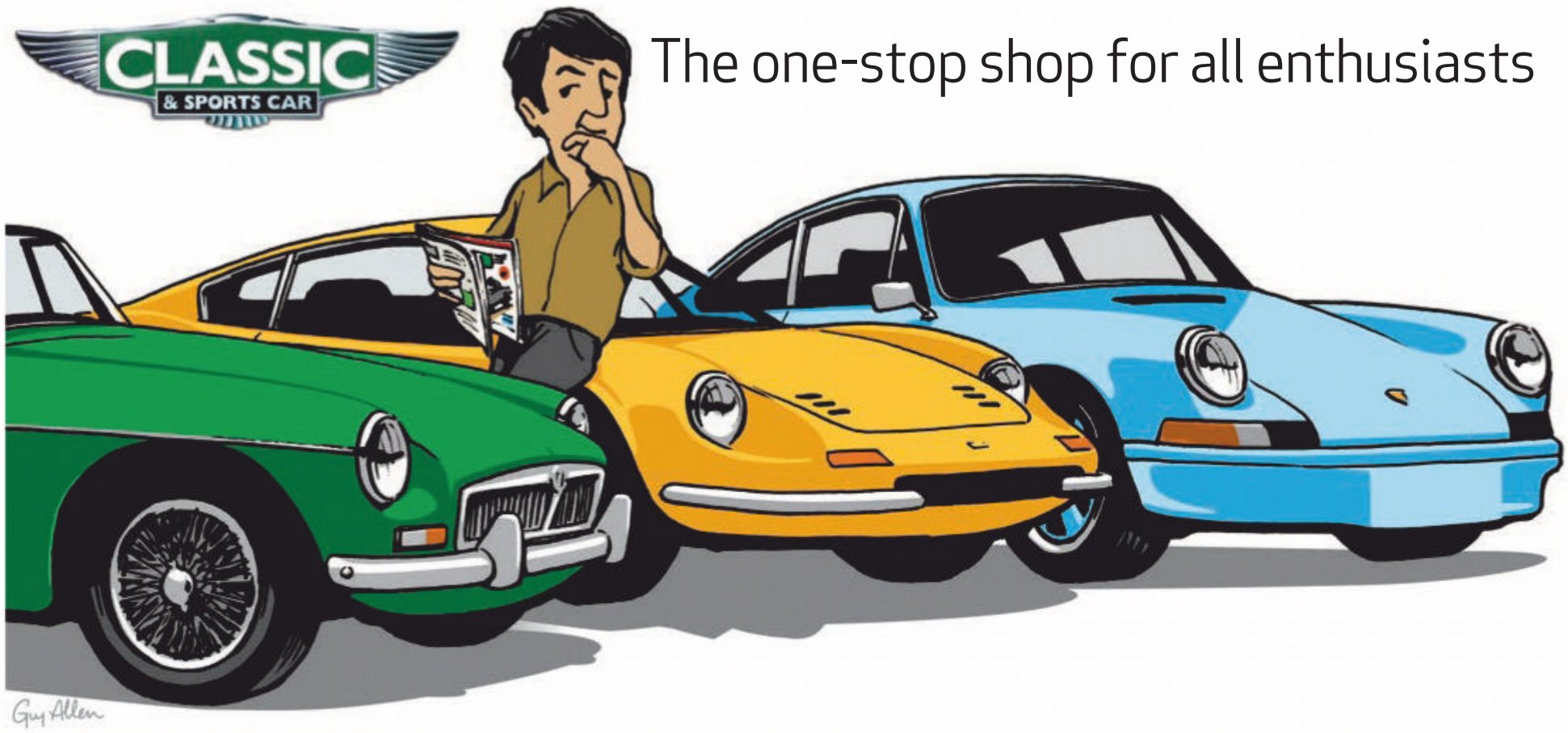
V6's fluids are all clean and to level, with no apparent leaks

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CASE HISTORIES Cars for sale we've tested this month



1997 Aston V8 Vantage *p189*



1966 Ford Cortina GT *p194*



'73 Pontiac Grand Safari *p206*

Our Case histories are carried out by experts and are a fair reflection of the selected cars on the day they were viewed and tested. They should not be taken as a full inspection, and buyers must satisfy themselves of a car's condition before purchase

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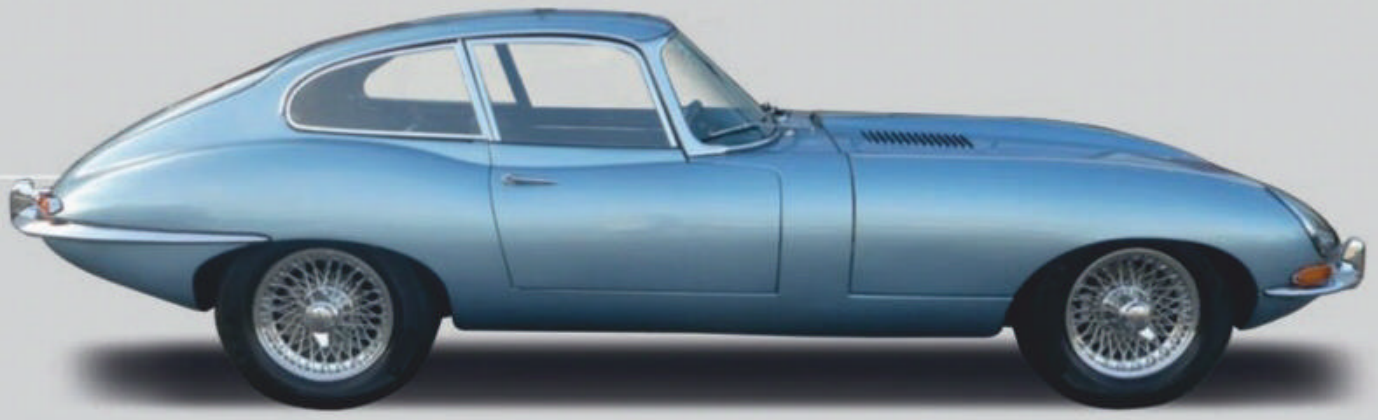
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2006 PANOZ ESPERANTE GTLM FIA GT2 RACE CAR - CHASSIS #009: Excellent condition, raced in Europe, 5.0 Ford Quad Cam engine, Hewland, Motec. $189,900 with spares



2000 LOLA B2K/40 AER-NISSAN ALMS P2: Sebring 12 Hour, (2004) and Daytona 24 Hour, (2002). Class Winner AER, Nissan 3.0 V6 eng. Hewland 6-sp sequential. Large spares pkg. $169,900



1997 ACURA NSX-R GT-2: One of original "Works" factory race cars. Chassis #11 of 11. Rolex 24 Hours of Daytona 1999 co-driven by Arnold-Gregg-Sifton-Stitt. Sister Car won its class at 24 Hours Le Mans 1995 and was 3rd 24 Hours Le Mans 1994. Recent complete and comprehensive restoration. It has not been raced since the 1999 Daytona 24 hour Race. SP.O.A.



2008 MAZDA RX-8 GRAND AM GT: Chassis #004, 3-Rotor engine. Emco six-speed sequential transmission, with no-lift shift. Full tube chassis with a carbon fiber composite body. Ran at the Daytona 24 from 2008-2013, (5x). Large spares package. $119,900



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1966 JAGUAR E-Type Series 1 4.2 Coupe. Carmen Red with Black interior trim. Extremely straight and correct. Matching Numbers UK RHD example. Drives beautifully. Chrome wire wheels. Good long-term ownership. A superb E-Type maintained by WinSpeed and offered with great confidence. **£105,000.00**



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Case histories

We test the classics that you can buy



ASTON MARTIN V8 VANTAGE V550

Year of manufacture 1997 **Recorded mileage** 14,432
Asking price £220,000 **Vendor** Nicholas Mee & Co, Herts; 020 8741 8822/ 020 3757 0974; www.nicholasmee.co.uk

WHEN IT WAS NEW

Price £189,950 **Max power** 550bhp **Max torque** 550lb ft
0-60mph 4.6 secs **Top speed** 186mph **Mpg** 13

This twin-supercharged V550 was converted into an auto early in its life – all 239 were built as six-speed manuals. Quite a few have grown traction control, too, but not this one, though the auto tends to cushion the torque delivery. It's a mid-production car – so round headlights, Jaguar mirrors and revised exhaust, but pre Mondeo doorhandles – and though it's had six owners, the first for 15 years, the mileage is low and it has a very good service record. There's the PDI plus seven stamps in the book, the last in March 2019 at Nicholas Mee, which subsequently took the car in part-exchange. If it's still in stock come March it'll have its fluids changed again; if it sells before, that service will likely be free.

The body is not scuffed, though it's probably had some paint (Antrim Blue) around the rear window, and there are light scrapes under the chin. Bills show that the underside has twice been cleaned off and re-coated. The wheels aren't kerbed, and shod with a matching set of well-treaded 2013 Pirellis. The only slightly unsightly aspect is a few blemishes within the headlight housings.

Inside, there's little evidence that it's been used, with just a small – and commensurate – amount of wear to the front seats. The headlining and dash top are perfect, and there are no cracks or scrapes in the veneers.

You can't see much of the 5340cc V8 past the handsome finned blowers, but it starts readily and drives just like a V8 with a wide footprint, with reassuringly weighty steering – until you point the big nose down a dual carriageway and give it a squirt. The blowers whine like a jet turbofan spooling up and it just takes off – it's not 'quick' like a modern V12, but the shove is relentless.

The four-speed auto hangs on to the gears nicely, though the change up to top is a little abrupt until it's warm, and there's a Sport setting that works, but isn't really needed. The brakes are nice and smooth, and all the electrics work including the clock, though the oil-pressure gauge reads unusually low at 3bar. It will be sold with handbooks, a build sheet and a new MoT, and looks good value compared to manual versions currently on the market.





SUMMARY

EXTERIOR
Even paint in a good colour, with no scuffs

INTERIOR
Hardly worn; excellent veneers

MECHANICALS
Low mileage; FSH

VALUE ★★★★★★★☆☆☆

For Stonk! Proper handbuilt Aston
Against Dinosaur looks (but we love them); some may prefer a manual

SHOULD I BUY IT?
Yes, for the blower whine alone. Plus it's less money than a V8 Vantage X-Pack, and no doubt set to be just as collectable



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Ford Escort MK2 RS2000, 1977
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Two owners, only 60.064 km , superb condition, like new!



Alfa Romeo 2600 Sprint, 1962
Rosso Amaranto with grey leather, very desirable and original, only three owners



Aston Martin DB2 Saloon,1952,
unique race/rally version, perfect condition, great history, comes including extra racing engine and spare parts



Ford Escort Mk1 1600 GT Mexico, 1973
Unique original, unrestored condition, only two owners
matching numbers, Dutch delivery



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Ford Escort Mk2 RS 1800 BDA,1978
Jaguar MK2 3.4,1967
Jensen Interceptor Mk3 Cabriolet,1976
Morris Eight Series Z Utility Cabrio,1953
Opel GT/J,1972
Peugeot 404 Cabriolet "floorshifter",1963
Porsche 911 2.0 E Coupe,1968
Porsche 356 BT5 Coupe,1961
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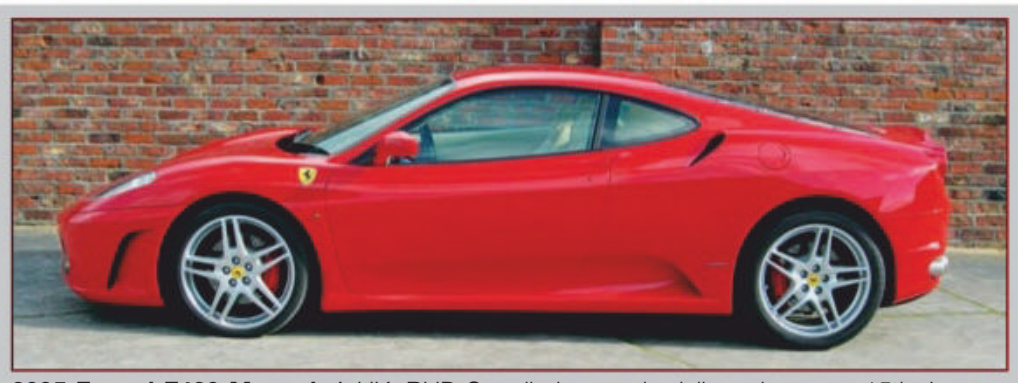
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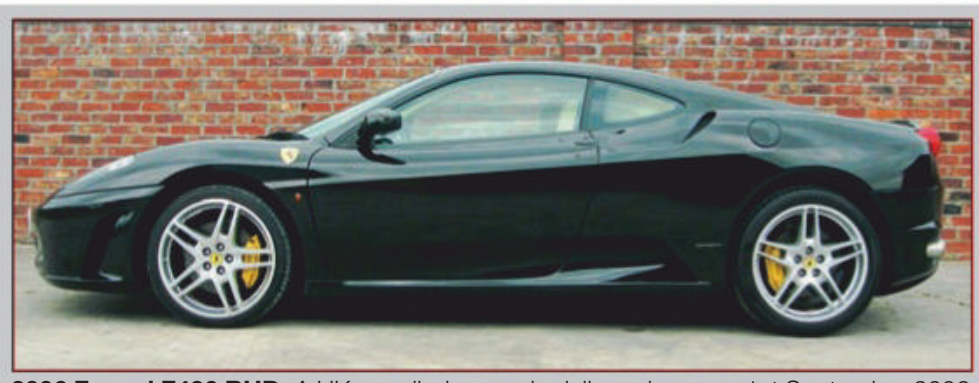
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2006 Ferrari F430 RHD. A UK supplied example delivered new on 1st September 2006 via JCT 600 Brooklands Leeds. Specified with a Nero Daytona exterior,Daytona crema interior, Nero stitching, leather headlining, carbon zone, yellow calipers and Scuderia shields. 3,980 miles with 2 previous owners, the last for 11 years. Complete documented main dealer service history and freshly serviced. **£109,850**



2008 Porsche 997 Turbo - RHD. A UK, RHD supplied example, delivered new on the 26th March 2008 via Porsche Centre Kendal, Longpool, Kendal. Specified in a GT Silver (U2U2) exterior, complemented by a Black leather interior, black alcantara headlining, fitted black carpet matts, Automatic Tiptronic transmission & red brake calipers. With documented main dealer OPC service history along with mot certificates on file, this freshly serviced, immaculate example of the collectible 483bhp, Mezger Hand built 3.8 Flat - 6, Twin H6 Turbo Charged, 997 Turbo, complete with documented history file is available for immediate inspection. **£68,850**



2001 Ferrari 360M Coupe. A UK supplied, RHD manual example delivered new via Stratstone's of Wilmslow on 1st March 2001, chassis #122827 was specified with an Argento Nurburgring exterior, complemented by a Nero leather interior, Nero carpeting and "medium" racing seats. With documented ownership and service history from new, this superb example has travelled only 21,800 miles. Complete with books, tools, spare keys, unused schedoni luggage set and freshly serviced prior to delivery. **£66,950**

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Robin Lawton

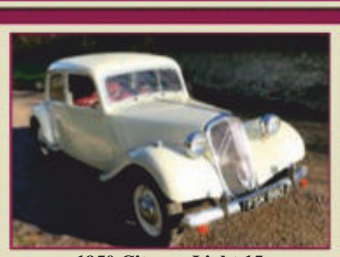
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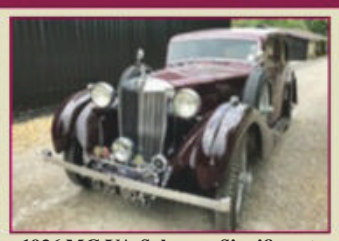
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1950 Citroen Light 15 Slough Built RHD



1936 MG VA Saloon – Signifi cant History Olympia Motor Show Car



1926 Vauxhall 30/98 OE



1958 MGA Roadster Last owner 21 years



1937 MG TA – Excellent restored example with MG Registration



1932 MG 'M' Type Midget VSCC Eligible



1968 MG GT – Automatic Only 61,000 miles from new



1923 Austin 12/4 Tourer



1931 Austin 7 'AF' Tourer Show Standard



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1932 Austin 7 'RP' De Luxe Saloon Concours Winner



1939 Lancia Aprilia Cabriolet Lusso Striking & Rare



1958 MG Magnette ZB MGB Engine & 5 speed gearbox



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1930 Austin 20/6 Ranelagh Landaulette



1929 Humber 16/50 Saloon Award Winning Car



1938 Riley 12/4 Six-Light Kestrel



1931 Riley Alpine 14/6 Saloon



1938 Austin Ten Conway Cabriolet



1959 Triumph TR3A



1929 Austin 7 'AD' Chummy

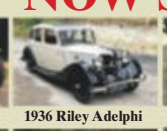


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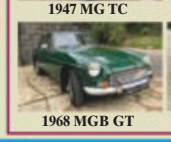
1936 Riley Adelphi



1968 MGC Roadster



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1968 MGB GT



1959 Austin-Healey



1958 MG Magnette



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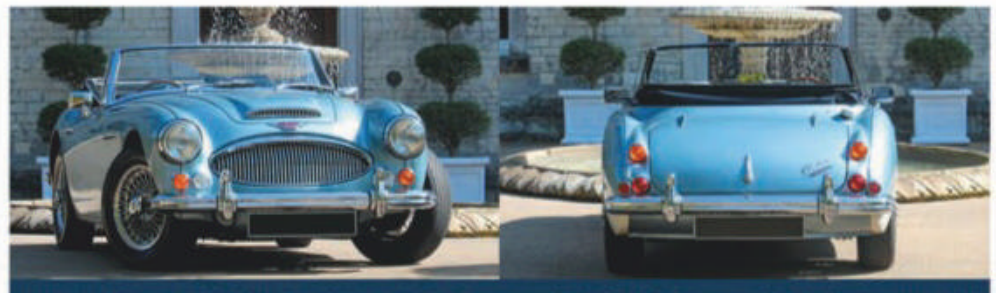
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Case histories

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FORD CORTINA GT

Year of manufacture 1966 **Recorded mileage** 1636
Asking price £29,950 **Vendor** Autostorico, Bucks; 01628 526455; www.autostorico.co.uk

WHEN IT WAS NEW

Price £811 **Max power** 74bhp **Max torque** 88lb ft
0-60mph 11.8 secs **Top speed** 93mph **Mpg** 26

This attractive GT – being a four-door has saved it from being made into a Lotus Cortina clone – was restored by a previous owner between 1998 and 2003: the recorded mileage could be since it went back on the road.

It is completely rot-free, with excellent door fit and a perfect boot floor, fuel tank, inner wings and strut-tops. It's super-clean underneath, too, with only a hint of surface corrosion starting on the front of the chassis rails. The brightwork is all good, and the worst you can find is that the rear badge enamel is flaking. The wheels are wider-than-standard (Lotus-size) 5½J steels, shod with 2001-dated 175/70 Dunlop SP10s, and the spare is unused.

Inside, the seat vinyl is good, the headlining and dash top perfect. The door cards are tidy, but their 'chrome' trims are a bit wavy. The 8-Track stereo comes with an assortment of tapes and the speakers are left loose to avoid cutting any trim. The wood-rim Les Leston steering wheel is a nice touch, and there's a pile of concours awards in the rear footwell.

The 1498cc pre-crossflow motor is tidy except for a little corrosion to the thermostat housing and water pump, and with a dynamo fitted it still looks stock, apart from the posh stainless-steel exhaust manifolds and front half of the system. There's lots of green coolant, and the oil is full and cleanish.

It starts easily with that distinctive Fast Ford rasp, and drives nicely once warmed up. It revs freely and goes better than you expect (these saloons weigh less than 900kg), and the gearchange is predictably excellent.

There's no play in the steering, even though it's a box, not rack and pinion. The only demerit is the brakes (discs up front, and unservoed), which are long and spongy of pedal, not very effective and tend to pull to the right. The car has been standing for a while, however, and they probably only need bleeding and a bit of use. The oil pressure is 30psi, midway up the gauge, the ammeter shows charge and the engine doesn't get hot.

In lovely fettle, this is an attractive and slightly left-field fast(ish) Ford.





SUMMARY

EXTERIOR
Good paint over a straight, rot-free body

INTERIOR
Vinyl is all good; nice Leston wheel

MECHANICALS
Rebuilt and works well

VALUE ★★★★★☆☆☆☆☆

For Usable alternative to a Lotus
Against Brakes need freeing/bleeding

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1912 Delage 12/16 hp Coming soon



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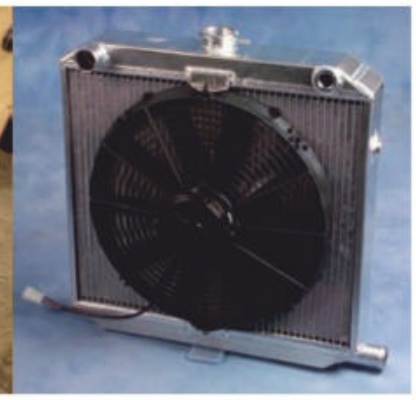
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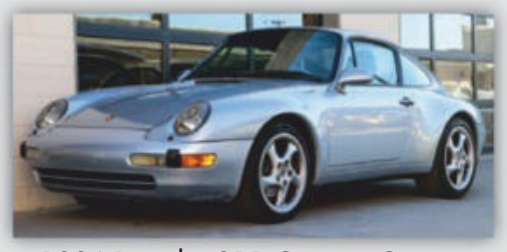


1987 BMW M6: Red/Linen.



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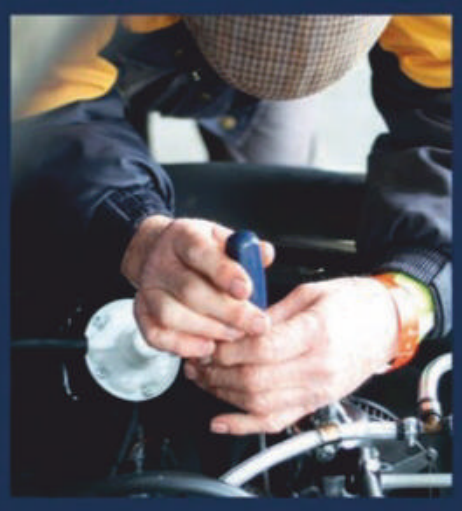


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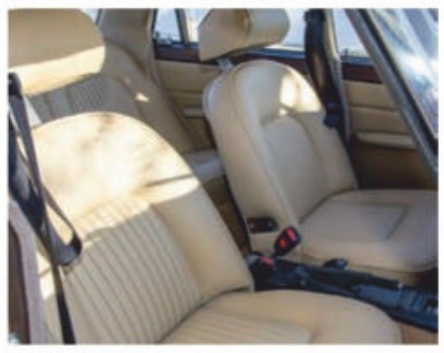
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Year of manufacture 1931 **Recorded mileage** 539
Asking price £45,000 **Vendor** The Motor Shed, Bicester Heritage; 01869 249999/07718 764463; www.vintageandclassiccars.co.uk
WHEN IT WAS NEW
Price £1780 **Max power** 50bhp **Max torque** n/a
0-60mph n/a **Top speed** c40mph **Mpg** n/a

And now for something completely different: we all wanted to drive a fire engine when we were kids, didn't we? Well, now you can. This splendid Braidwood-bodied LTB1 is believed to be one of five built on the 12ft 3in Lioness FE chassis, and three remaining. It served 35 years from new with Bristol Fire Brigade, some of the time in Avonmouth, and escaped being painted grey in WW2. Subsequent owners included English China Clay Quarries, which used it to pump out flooded pits, before it reached private ownership in 1993. The restoration included a new radiator to replace the original that was stolen and it still presents well, with decent paint and good nickel to all the working parts, though some of the plating on the left outlets is a bit pickled.

There's no reason to suggest any of it doesn't work. Certainly the 50ft escape (a two-piece John Morris Ajax extension) looks complete with all its pulleys and rigging, and it retains its piping, cocks and Leyland-made gauges, with a bungee cord holding the main 700 gals-per-minute Rees Ro Turbo pump in the 'off' position. The side lockers contain jacks and period breathing kit.

On the running gear, there's plenty of grease around the kingpins, while the Michelin (rear) and Uniroyal (front) tyres are old and cracked, with the spare a newish Bulldog remould. The seat leather is good and there's an extra fuel cock discreetly hidden away. The exhaust is a handsome twin-pipe stainless affair.

The 8840cc straight-six motor looks functional, and there's lots of coolant – it's a bit of a climb to the radiator cap – plus cleanish oil. It starts easily and is quite simple to drive; heavy, with a non-synchro four-speed, but not as loco-like as a Scammell Explorer. The centre throttle has a heel rest, which helps remind you of the pedal layout, and the brakes are quite sharp. Though there's clearly a massive flywheel to overcome it's torquey and goes quite well for its bulk; vendor Mark Elder says it'll do 40mph comfortably, but contemporary reports suggest a bit more. Oil pressure is 60psi, and the extra temperature gauge read only about 65°C on a short drive. And the bell works – ding ding!





SUMMARY

EXTERIOR
Good body and paint; handsome coachlines

INTERIOR
Fairly recent seat leather

MECHANICALS
All works, apparently

VALUE ★★★★★★☆☆☆☆

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1962 Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud III. Finished in Pine Green with Light tan hide Covered just 102,000 Miles from new with 1 family owner from new. Father and son. A stunning example in exceptional condition. **£72,000**



1964 Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud III. Finished in Smoke Green over Shell Grey Green Hide Interior. 72,000 miles, Just 4 former keepers. Good Service History. A first class example in outstanding condition. **£89,000**



1972 Rolls Royce Corniche Convertible. Finished in Regal Red with Tan hide interior. Presented in stunning condition throughout. New white wall tyres, recent mechanical overhaul, outstanding bodywork. Fully serviced with 1 years MoT. **£75,000**



1980 Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow 2. Finished in Antelope. 60,528 miles from new Full service history Tan hide piped Brown interior. Excellent condition throughout. **£28,500**



1989 Bentley Mulsanne S. Finished in Light ocean Blue 43,000 miles full service history Light Blue piped Dark Blue interior History. One of the best and most original examples of this scarce model. **£16,000**



1993 Bentley Turbo R. Finished in Diamond graphite Magnolia, Hide Interior, 52,000 miles. Service by Bentley up until 2010 then by specialists. Last of the pre head gasket cars. Exceptional condition throughout. **£17,000**



1993 (1994MY) Turbo R. Racing Green Magnolia Hide Interior 70,600 miles Full service history with main agents and specialists. One of the finest we have seen. **£17,000**



1993 Bentley Brooklands. Brooklands Green, tan hide piped Green. 54,000 miles. 4 former keepers. Full service history. Jack Barclay maintained. Exceptional. **£18,000**



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2000 Bentley Arnage Red label. Royal blue, Magnolia piped blue interior. 97,000 miles. Full service history. 2 former keepers. Recent replacement from the head gaskets. Exceptional condition. **£22,000**



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2005 Mercedes SLK200 Kompressor. Tellurium Silver, A/C, 27000 miles, FSH. **£6,995**



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Moretti 1200 Sport Spider, 1955.



Lancia B24 America Spyder, 1955.



Riley 9 Brooklands Le Mans, 1932.

AC Bristol Roadster, 1958.
Aston Martin Short Chassis, 1933.
Chevron B19, ex Ray Bellm.
Ferrari 550 barchetta, 2001.
Ferrari 250GT Boano, 1956.
Ferrari Testarossa Monospecchio, 1986.
Lancia B20 Coupe MM, 1953.
Lancia Delta HF Dealer, 1995.
Maserati Trofeo racing, 2003.
Mini Cooper S, 1971. FIA G2 racing-car
Mercedes 280SL, manual. 1970.
MG-B SEC Turbo, '80. 1 of 5 made by MGOC.
Porsche 911/930 RUF Turbo, 1978.
Porsche 997 Cup-racer. 2014 Specifications.
Jaguar XK120 OTS, 1950. LHD. Original.
VW T1b Wolfsburg Transporter, 1955.

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WHEN IT WAS NEW

Price $6564 **Max power** 215bhp **Max torque** 350lb ft
0-60mph 10.8 secs **Top speed** 117mph **Mpg** 11

This splendid people carrier – you can't really call it a monument to excess when it's about equivalent in weight and toys to a modern Range Rover – has all of the options including a 455cu in V8, disc brakes, air-con, Rally II wheels and electric everything such as seat adjustment. It was delivered to the US – there are lots of state stickers in the back windows from its travels – but it now runs a metric speedometer. Vendor Danny Donovan bought it in Italy, though it was previously in Germany, and the real mileage is around 42,000.

The last model year for the electrically-operated 'Glide-away' tailgate (the glass upper part slides into the roof), it looks never to have had paint, and the roof vinyl and plastic side panels are perfect. The edge beads are peeling a little but they're all there. The brightwork is all good, save a few small scratches on the rear bumper, and the tailgate glass seal is a little perished, but that's about it. The Firestones have plenty of tread, underneath it's super-clean and there's a recent-looking custom stainless exhaust with single side outlet.

Inside, the deeply grained vinyl trim is excellent on all three rows of seats, as is the dashboard top, and the carpets are unworn, though slightly grubby. All of the electrics – windows and mirrors – work, and the only things that don't are the clock and the internal switch for the upper tailgate retract, though it works fine from outside on the key. The modern stereo with speakers cut into the rear side panels hides well.

The optional 455 is clean and tidy, and there are various new pipes and solenoids on the air-con system, though it blows cold only weakly. The fluids are all clean and it starts easily with a lovely bass wuffle. The Grand Safari is a doddle to drive despite its vast bulk, which seems to shrink on the move, and really puts a smile on your face. It's very comfortable yet not as wallowy as you'd expect, with sharp brakes and reasonably obedient steering. It's not eager to kick down, but there's so much torque it doesn't matter. Oil pressure is a mid-gauge 40psi at tickover, warm (180°F), rising to 60psi with revs.





SUMMARY

EXTERIOR
Good paint, vinyl and chrome
INTERIOR
No damage, and lasting well
MECHANICALS
Behaves itself; doesn't feel baggy
VALUE ★★★★★☆☆☆☆☆
For Well, just look at it!
Against You'll need a long garage; claimed 11mpg is on a good day
SHOULD I BUY IT?
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1960 AUSTIN HEALEY 3000 BT7 - ORIGINAL RIGHT HAND DRIVE / SAME OWNER SINCE 1975 / ORIGINAL UK REGISTRATION LOG BOOK / FULL RESTORATION IN 2000 WITH PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD / RARE FACTORY HARDTOP / SOFT TOP AND TONNEAU COVER / OVERDRIVE FITTED TO GEARBOX.



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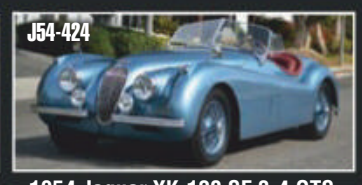
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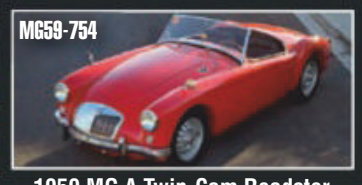
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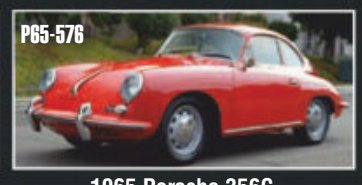
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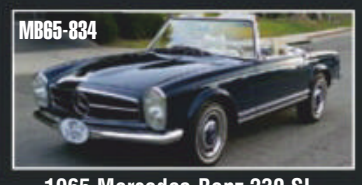
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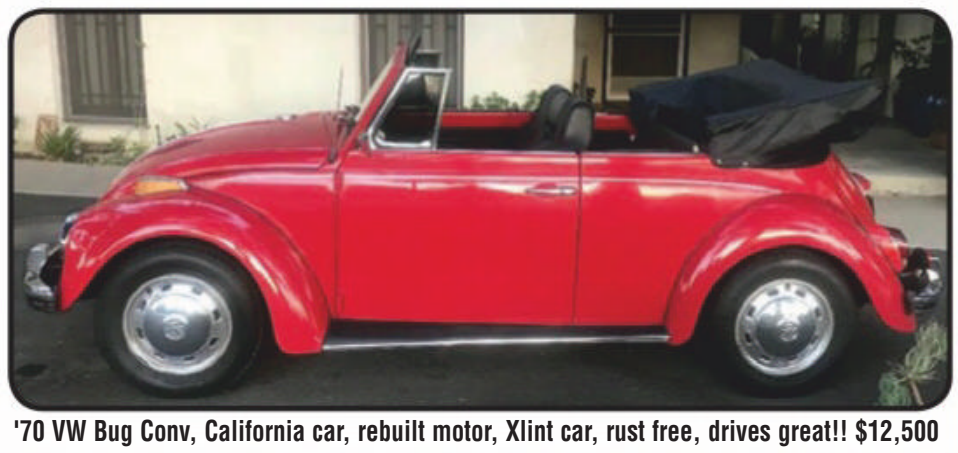
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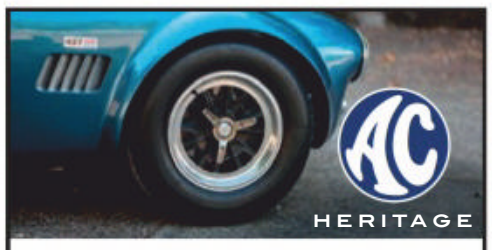
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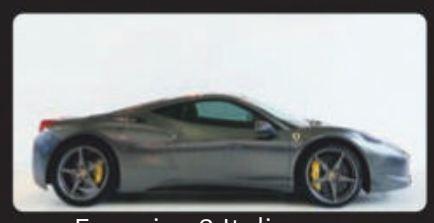
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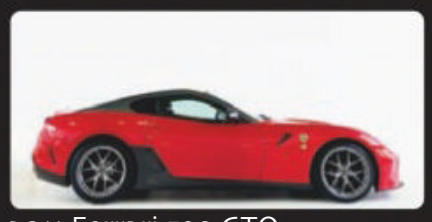


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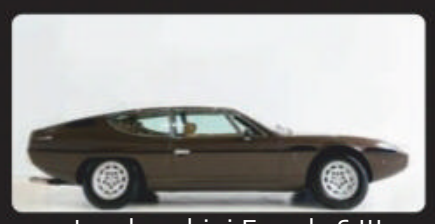
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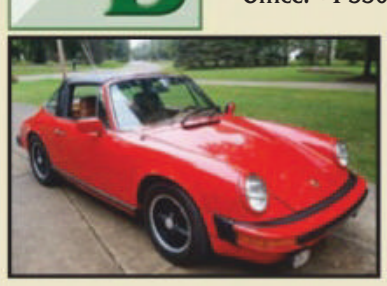


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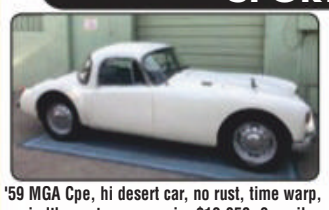


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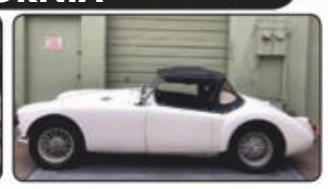
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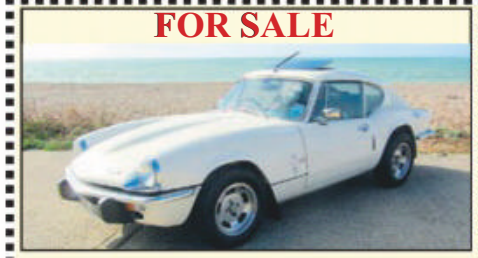
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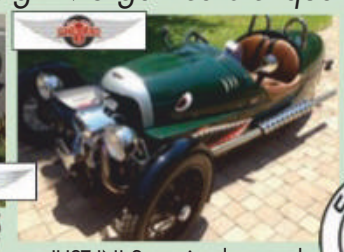
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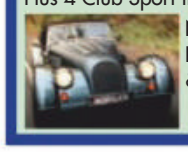
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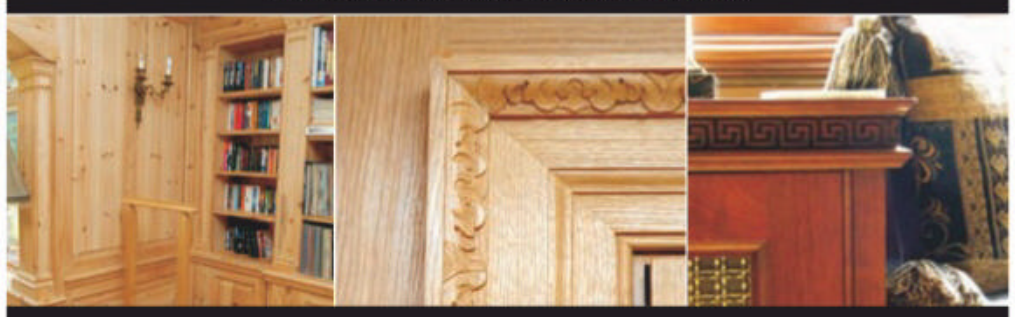
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2020 Events Diary

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Wednesday 1st January : 12pm - 3pm
NEW YEAR'S DAY CHARITY MEET
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Sunday 5th April : 10am - 1pm
COFFEE & CLASSICS
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Sunday 26th April : 10am - 1pm
DRIVE-IT DAY CELEBRATION
for all owners of classic vehicles

Sunday 3rd May : 10am - 1pm
VE CELEBRATION
a street party for owners of military and period vehicles

Saturday 16th May: 10am - 3pm
RIDE-IT DAY CELEBRATION
for all owners of classic motorcycles

Sunday 7th June: 10am - 1pm
COFFEE & ITALIAN CLASSICS
for all owners of Italian vehicles

Sunday 5th July: 10am - 1pm
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Saturday 18th July: 5pm - 10pm
HUB SUMMER BBQ
open to all friends and followers

Sunday 2nd August: 10am - 1pm
COFFEE & PRE-1970s CLASSICS
open to all vehicles registered before 1st Jan 1970

Sunday 6th September: 10am - 1pm
COFFEE & 70s, 80s & 90s CLASSICS
open to all 70s, 80s and 90s classics

Sunday 4th October: 10am - 1pm
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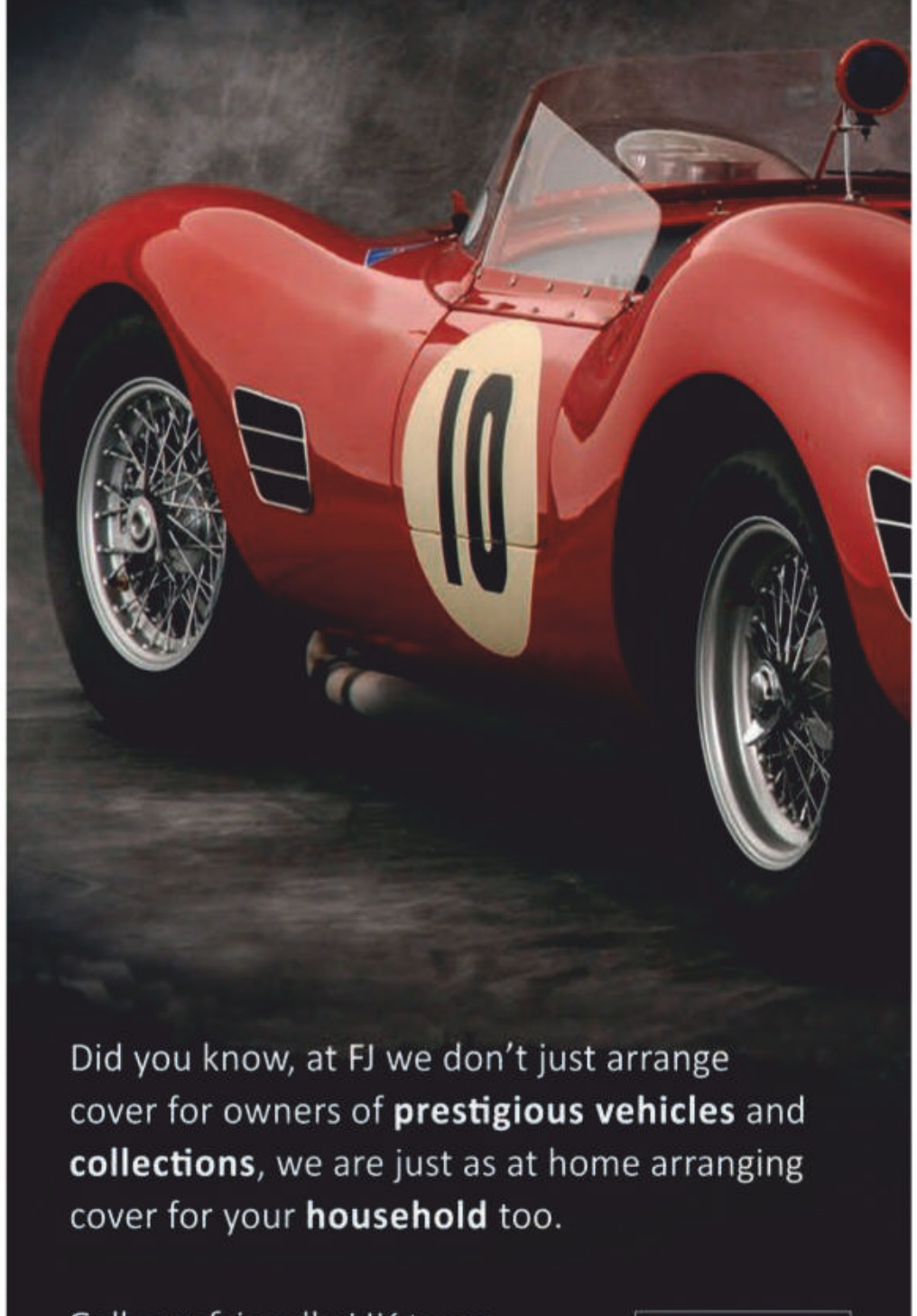
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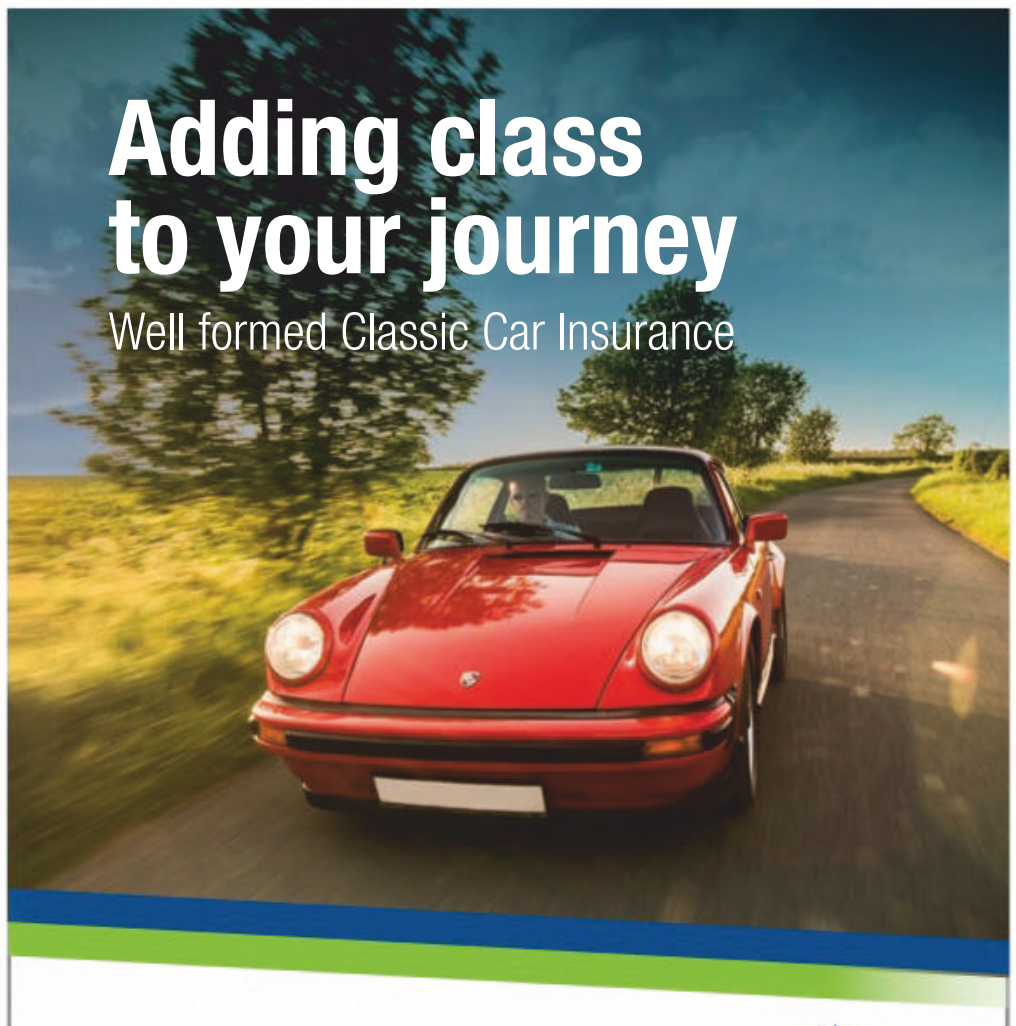
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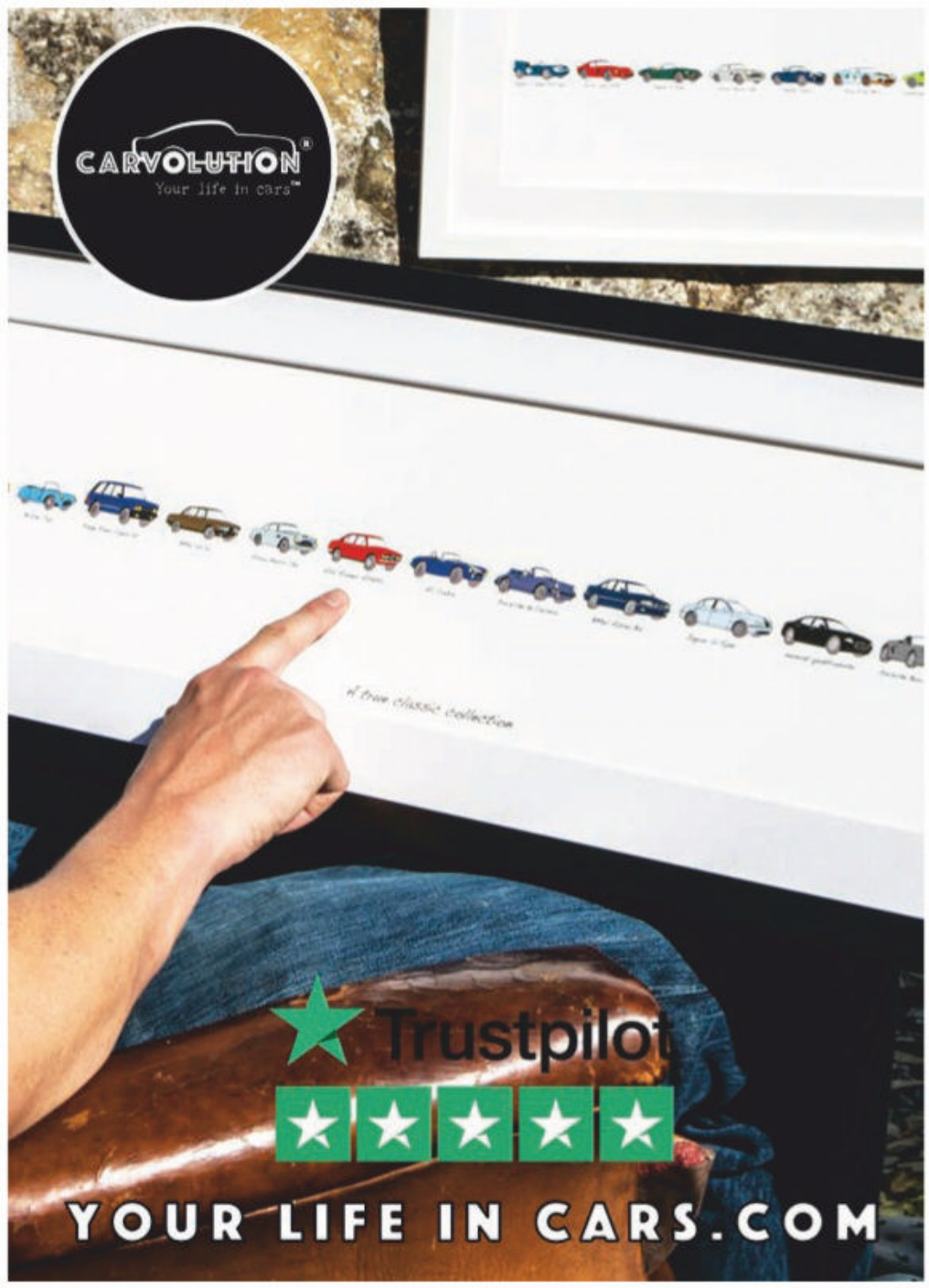
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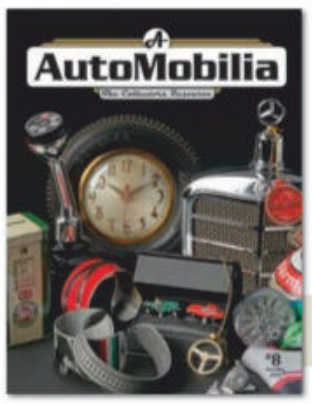
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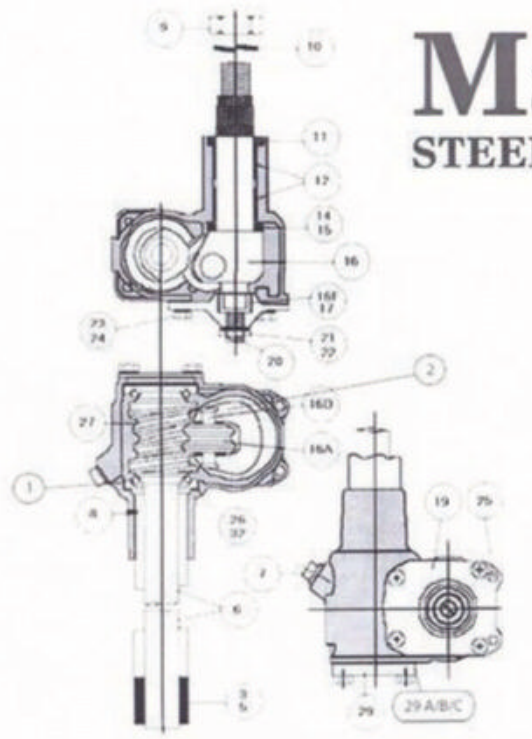
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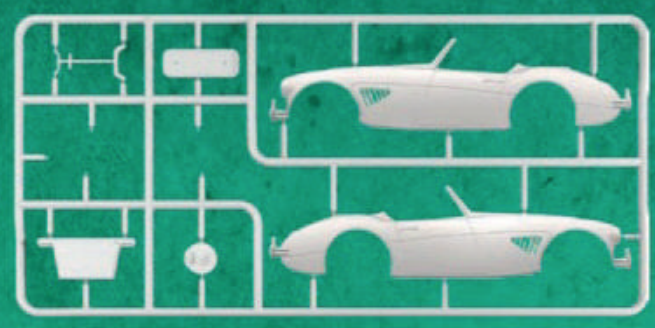
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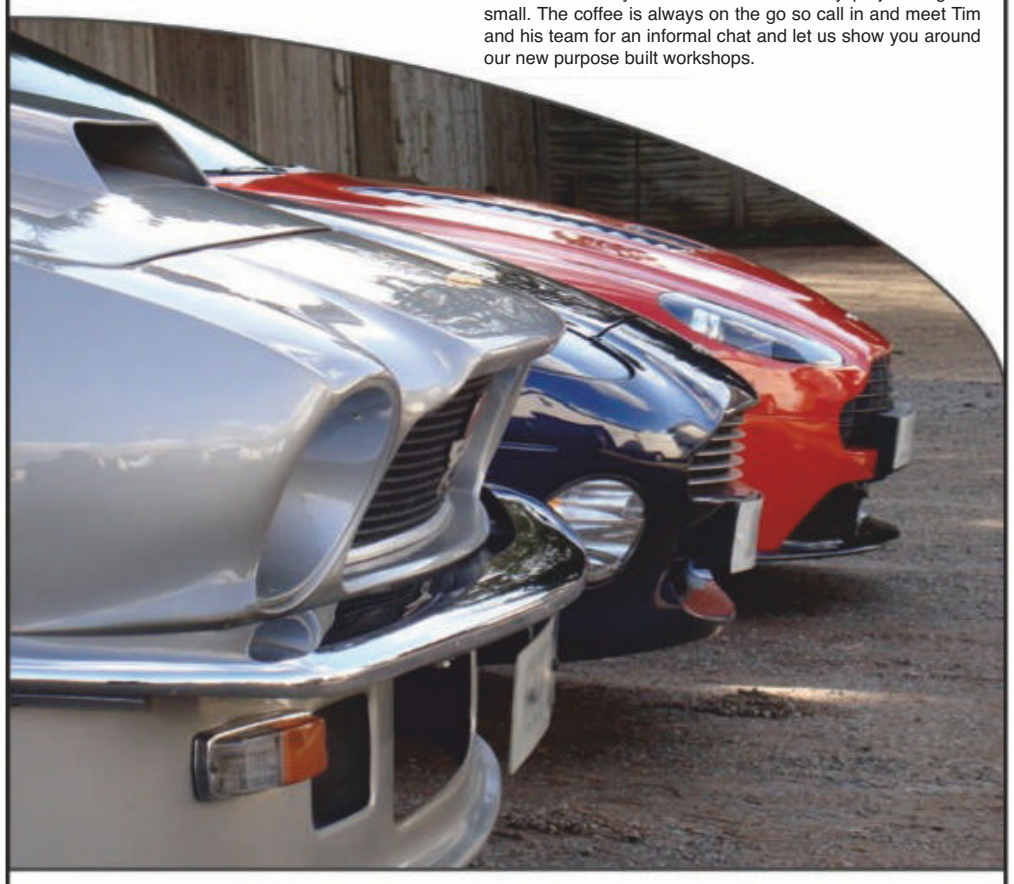
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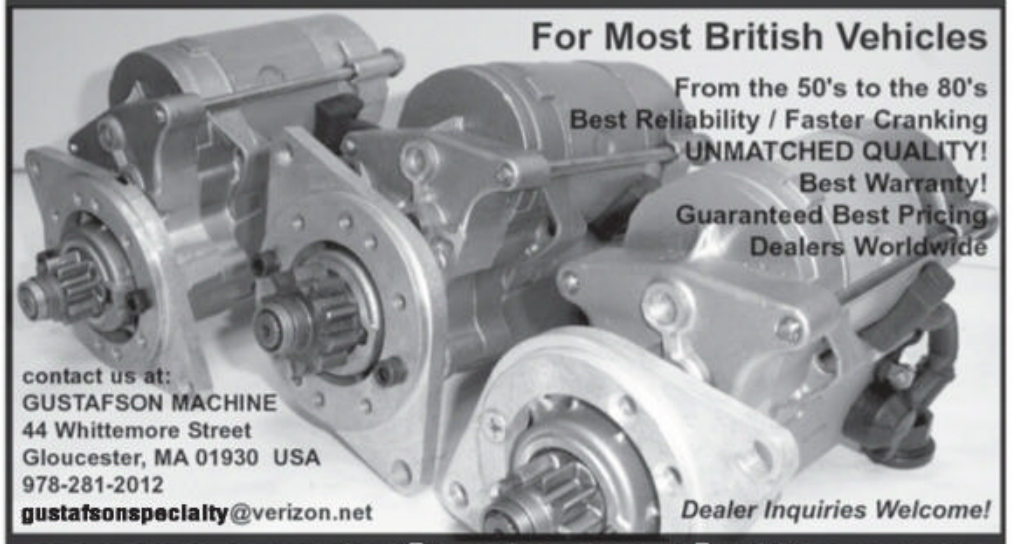
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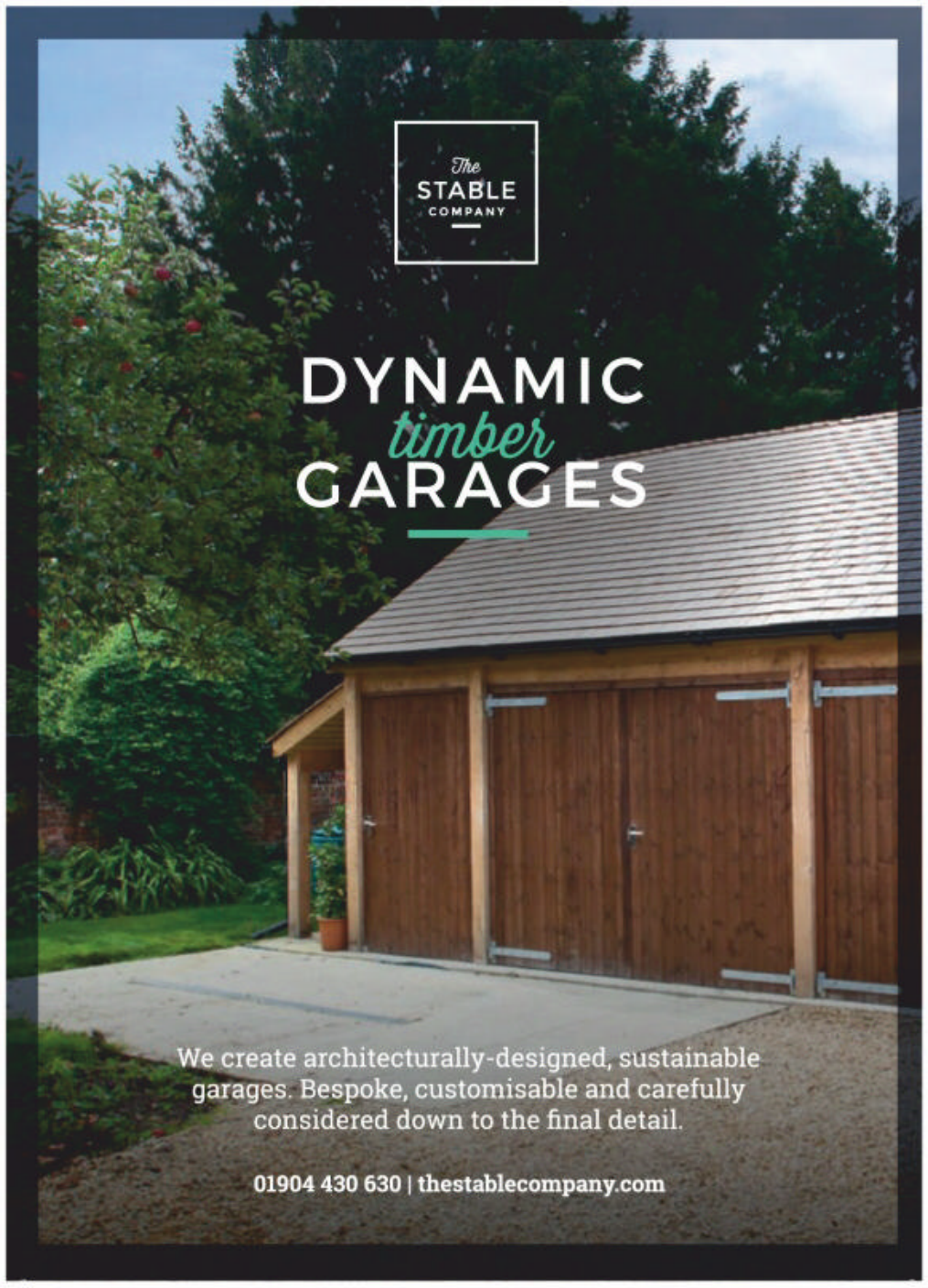


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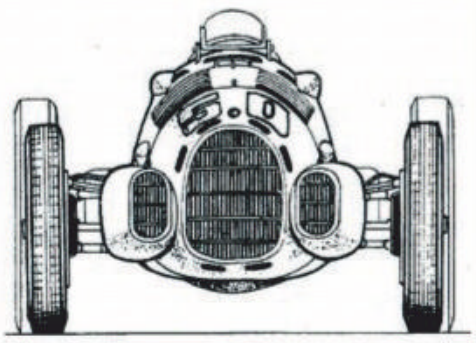
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NEW YEAR'S DAY CHARITY MEET
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Sunday 5th April : 10am - 1pm
COFFEE & CLASSICS
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Sunday 26th April : 10am - 1pm
DRIVE-IT DAY CELEBRATION
for all owners of classic vehicles

Sunday 3rd May : 10am - 1pm
VE CELEBRATION
a street party for owners of military and period vehicles

Saturday 16th May: 10am - 3pm
RIDE-IT DAY CELEBRATION
for all owners of classic motorcycles

Sunday 7th June: 10am - 1pm
COFFEE & ITALIAN CLASSICS
for all owners of Italian vehicles

Sunday 5th July: 10am - 1pm
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Saturday 18th July: 5pm - 10pm
HUB SUMMER BBQ
open to all friends and followers

Sunday 2nd August: 10am - 1pm
COFFEE & PRE-1970s CLASSICS
open to all vehicles registered before 1st Jan 1970

Sunday 6th September: 10am - 1pm
COFFEE & 70s, 80s & 90s CLASSICS
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Sunday 4th October: 10am - 1pm
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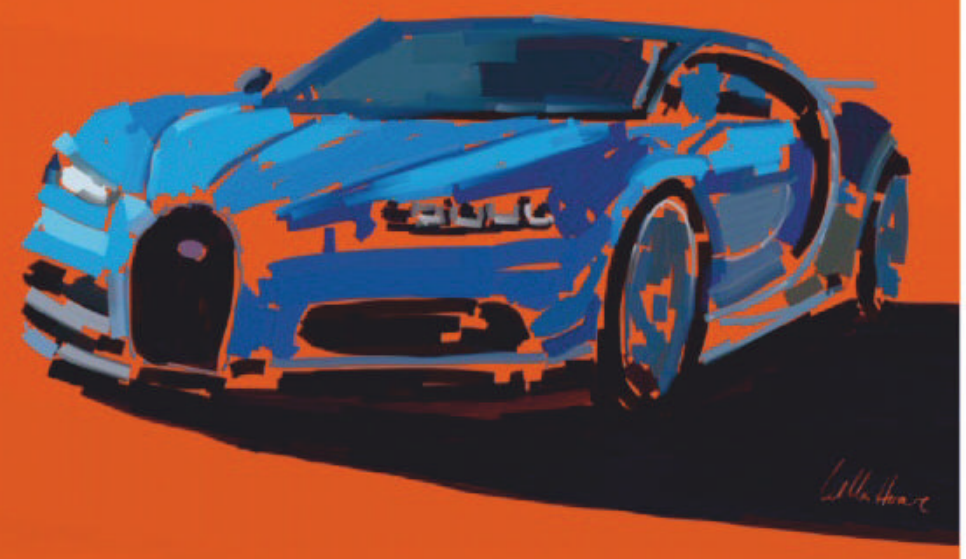
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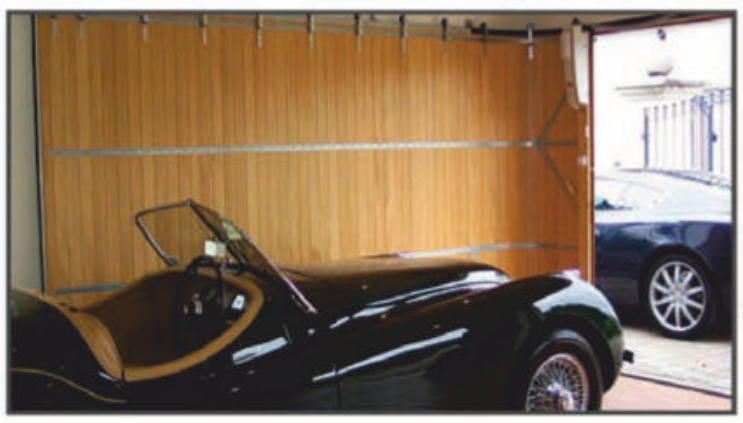
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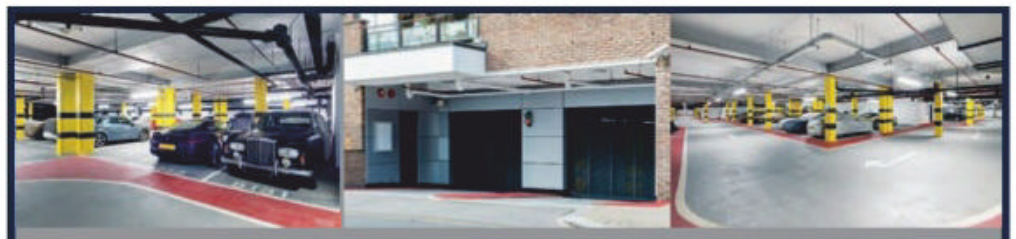




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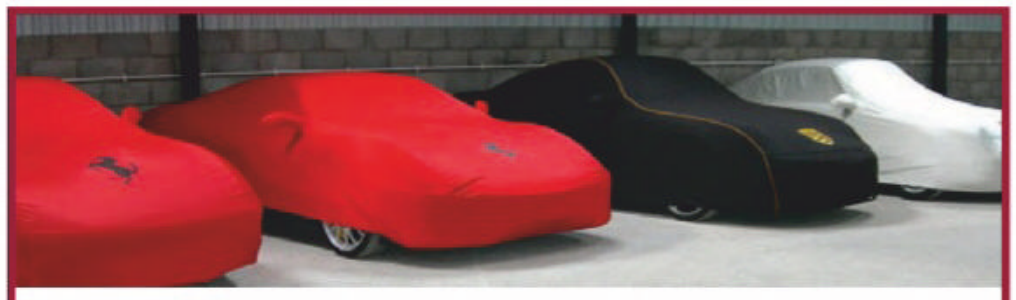
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TOYOTA GR SUPRA

A famous name returns, but under the skin this new coupé isn't quite what it seems

WORDS **ALASTAIR CLEMENTS** PHOTOGRAPHY **MAX EDLESTON**

It almost feels as if the new Supra should be a classic already, such has been the length of this fifth-generation model's gestation. In the end, it took a strategic partnership between Toyota and BMW to get it over the line – and if you're taking the cynical view, you can replace the phrase 'strategic partnership' with 'badge engineering'. While the spec sheet follows the lead of every Supra back to 1978 – front-mounted straight-six, rear-wheel drive – under the coupé bodywork the new Supra is essentially the same as the latest BMW Z4.

Not that you'd know it from the outside, because it looks every millimetre a Toyota. Sharp, aggressive and distinctive, it blends clear hints of its A80 Supra predecessor – without appearing retro – with cues from the FT-HS concept car from the 2007 New York Auto Show (did I mention it's been a long time coming?). Inside, the Munich memories are quickly revived by the familiar switchgear and general architecture, but there's a different ambience from the close-fitting 'double-bubble' roof.

And while a Z4 has a bit of a reputation as a softer choice than the likes of the Porsche Boxster, the Supra feels a more focused, harder machine. The ride is firm – and fairly noisy – but find a challenging route and it's hugely involving. And, on wet autumnal roads at least, it's extremely lively. The tail skips around at the slightest provocation, but rarely causes a scare because you're so far back it feels as if you're sitting over the rear wheels and there's plenty of communication through your backside.

FUTURE CLASSIC





Sadly, there's rather less chit-chat from the rather anodyne steering. It's quick enough, and nicely weighted, but lacks any conclusive feedback and isn't aided by the bulky (BMW) wheel – whose gearshift paddles also take some finding. Not that there are any complaints about the superb eight-speed automatic 'box they operate; flicking down a ratio transforms the character of the muscular turbocharged 3-litre straight-six, from torquey lugger to highly strung screamer, with wonderfully linear power delivery right up to the 7000rpm redline.

It's quickly apparent that it really doesn't matter if this is a BMW in a fancy suit. Badge engineering is one of the great traditions of the classic world, and this reskin results in something pretty special. Driving home on a favourite road on a dark evening, peering through the shallow 'screen down the long, plunging nose, with the borrowed Bavarian bits inside hidden by the dark, it occurs that this Supra is a car that follows in the great tradition of hardcore Japanese GTs such as the 240Z and Toyota's own 2000GT. Sportier and more exciting than a traditional *gran turismo*, yet also practical and usable.

In short, the Supra was well worth the wait.





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